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THE

MICROCOSM,

A PERIODICAL WORK,

BY

GREGORY GRIFFIN,

Of the COLLEGE of ETON.

Inscribed to the Rev. Dr. DAVIES.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

THE THIRD EDITION.

Quid vetat et nosmet.—HOR.

WINDSOR:
PUBLISHED FOR C. KNIGHT, CASTLE-STREET;
AND SOLD BY MESS. ROBINSONS, PATER-
NOSTER-ROW; AND MR. DEBRETT,
PICCADILLY, LONDON.

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THE MICROCOSM.

MONDAY, *November* 6, 1786.

Protinus Italiam concepit, et arma virumque,
Qui modo vix culicem fleverat ore rudi.—MARTIAL.

HE, who a gnat had wept with artleſs tongue,
"ARMS AND THE MAN" *in loftier numbers ſung.*

IT has often been obſerved, that an introduction is the part of a work the moſt embarraſſing to the Author, as well as the leaſt entertaining to the Reader. I have frequently wiſhed that Cuſtom, or a literary etiquette, had preſcribed ſome form ſo general, as to preclude the idea of plagiariſm, while it ſe-

cured the Author from the apprehenſion of miſ-repreſenting himſelf to the world; as for inſtance,

TO

THE MOST HIGH AND PUISSANT CRITICS,
BY THE SUFFERANCE OF THEIR SUBJECTS,
OF WIT, POETRY, AND HUMOUR, KINGS,
DEFENDERS OF TASTE,
THE MICROCOSMOPOLITAN SENDS GREETING,
&c. &c. &c.

Next to this, the method almoſt univerſally adopted by periodical writers, of uſurping a feigned name and character, is perhaps the moſt eligible; the dignity of the Author is not diminiſhed by the egotiſms of Iſaac Bickerſtaff, and the Man with the ſhort face reflects no portion of the ridiculous in his character on Steele or Addiſon.

Thus then I, GREGORY GRIFFIN, ſally forth in this *our* leſſer world, to pluck up by the roots the more trifling follies, and cheriſh the opening buds of riſing merit.

It is the duty of a prudent General, before he hazards an engagement, to ſecure a ſafe retreat; why

why ſhould a ſimilar conduct be leſs defenſible in an Author? And now a conjecture there is, very likely to have ariſen in the minds of my readers, and which they will wonder I have not anſwered before; namely, who I AM; Now as nothing is more painful than an ungratified deſire of knowledge, I would adviſe my Readers to repreſs and ſmother in its infancy this unhappy paſſion of inquiſitiveneſs; as, whatever be the ſucceſs of this my work, ſuch precautions have been taken with regard to myſelf, as ſhall elude all the efforts of enquiry, and baffle all the arts of Curioſity. Suffice it, that I boaſt with them of "*ſucking the milk* "*of Science*" from our Mother Eton, under the auſpices of its preſent Director; to whom, (ſhould this work ever be deemed worthy of ſo diſtinguiſhed a Patronage) I would wiſh to preſume to look up for countenance and protection. But to proceed in the explanation of my deſign. As this attempt [illegible] raiſed ſome degree of curioſity [illegible] to which it is addreſs'd, as it is [illegible] itſelf new a[illegible] unprecedented in the annals of Eton, I think incumbent on me, before I proceed any farther, to give an ample account of its ſcope and deſign; that the reader may be fully acquainted with the nature of the amuſement or

inſtruction he may expect to find; and that I may obviate any objections, which I foreſee will ariſe to this undertaking. Theſe I ſhall rank under the following heads;—the age of the Author,—the time it may take from his more ſerious avocations,—and the tendency of the work itſelf.

When the reſpectable names of the Spectator, the Guardian, or the Rambler recur to our memory, we ſtart, and are aſtoniſhed at the preſumption of a *puny Authorling*, who dares, at ſo early an age, tread in the ſteps of theſe Heroes of Wit and Literature. No one can ſuppoſe, that it is my intention to affect to rival theſe illuſtrious Predeceſſors. All that I can claim, is a ſincere deſire of executing that deſign in a narrower ſphere, which they ſuſtained with ſuch applauſe in the wider Theatre of the world. My ambition, I hope is not illaudable; and if an apology is neceſſary for ſo early an attempt, I can plead the great examples both of ancient and modern Learning: Virgil and Pope produced their Paſtorals long before the one became the glory of Rome as her Epick Poet, or the other of Britain, as her Philoſopher and Satiriſt; if theſe ex-

examples are objected to, as more peculiar to Poetry than Profe, Cicero's Treatife de Inventione was the juvenile effort of that mind, which was in future time to point the thunders of its eloquence againſt the betrayers of their country; to cruſh the audacious villainy of a Catiline; or ſtrip the deep hypocriſy of an Antony of its ſpecious covering. If the above-mentioned compoſitions were only the preludes to the greater glories of a riper age, may not I, without incurring the charge of too much preſumption, try the feebler efforts of my Genius, and by degrees attempt to accuſtom myſelf to undertakings of a more trying and arduous nature.

For the time which it may be thought to take from my more ſerious avocations, the anſwer will be briefly this. It only occupies a few leiſure hours, which might be more triflingly, if not more unworthily employed. This is an harmleſs recreation at leaſt. My only aim is, that my leiſure moments may in ſome reſpects be amuſing, and I hope in ſome degree inſtructive to others, as well as myſelf.—*Perſonal* reputation cannot be my object; as the voice neither of praiſe or calumny can affect him, who by remaining un-

known, remains equally inacceſſible to either: The friends I ſhould gain by this attempt would be uſeleſs, the enemies (if enemies I had) harmleſs. Profit cannot be my object, when the circulation is confined to ſuch a narrow compaſs, and even that I would not wiſh to enlarge; if this Eſſay will defray the expences incident to ſuch an undertaking, it is the ſummit of my hopes, and this, by the Patronage of the Circle I addreſs myſelf to, I flatter myſelf I may perform.

To explain the nature and tendency of the work itſelf, is a taſk of greater length and difficulty; but this I ſhall willingly undertake, rather than leave the ſmalleſt part of this deſign unexplained, and conſequently ſubject to ignorant miſapprehenſions, or wilful miſconſtruction. My deſign is to amuſe, and as far as I am able to inſtruct. Trifling I ſhall endeavour as much as it is in my power to avoid; and the leaſt tendency to immorality or profaneneſs, I abſolutely, and in the ſtrongeſt terms reprobate and diſavow. Does any one aſk from whence am I to collect the materials for ſuch an undertaking? from whence can I have acquired a fund of knowledge, language, or obſervation ſufficient to purſue this arduous plan?

plan? my Materials are copious; the whole range, the inexhauſtible fund of topics, which every event in Life, every paſſion, every object preſent, lie before me; add to theſe, the ſtores which Hiſtory, reading, and morality, or the offspring of a Muſe juſt ſtruggling into notice can ſupply, combined with the topics of the moment, or thoſe which our peculiar ſituation can afford, together with the hints, which thoſe, who think the correſpondence of the Microcoſm worth their attention, may caſually contribute; ſurvey all theſe, and can I heſitate a moment, can I complain of a dearth of matter, or call my ſubject a barren one?

Quicquid agunt pueri; *noſtri farrago libelli.*
——— *with faithful hints pourtrays*
The various paſſions youth's warm ſoul diſplays.

Not that I mean to exclude every thing of the light or humourous kind. The mind muſt ſometimes be relieved from the ſeverity of its ſtricter ſtudies, and deſcending from the ſublimer heights of ſpeculative thought, deign to bend to inferior objects, and participate in leſs refined gratifications.

I conſider the ſcene before me as a MICROCOSM, a world in miniature, where all the paſſions which

agitate the great original, are faithfully pourtrayed on a ſmaller ſcale; in which the endleſs variety of character, the different lights and ſhades, which the appetites, or peculiar ſituations throw us into, begin to diſcriminate, and expand themſelves. The curious obſerver may here remark in the bud the different caſts and turns of Genius, which will in future ſtrongly characterize the leading features of the mind. He may ſee the embryo Stateſman, who hereafter may wield and direct at pleaſure the mighty and complex ſyſtem of European Politics, now employing the whole extent of his abilities to circumvent his companions at their plays, or adjuſting the important differences, which may ariſe between the contending heroes of his little circle; or a General, the future terror of France and Spain, now the dread only of his Equals, and the undiſputed Lord and Preſident of the boxing-ring. The Grays and Wallers of the riſing generation here tune their little lyres; and he, who hereafter may ſing the glories of Britain, muſt firſt celebrate at Eton the ſmaller glories of his College.

In the number and variety of the ſubjects which I may occaſionally touch upon, it is impoſ-

ſible,

ſible, but that ſomebody may find a foible or a vanity, which he is conſcious of, ſlightly reproved or ridiculed; but I ſolemnly renounce all intention of perſonal applications: It would not only be cruel and unwarrantable in itſelf, wantonly to expoſe defects, which all are in ſome meaſure liable to; but would alſo effectually defeat my own intentions. Who would favour or protect him, who, Drawcanſir like, indiſcriminately ſlaſhed and cut at all around him? my anſwer to this objection is brief,

Qui capit ille facit,
Let the gall'd jade wince:

I have now fairly and candidly ſtated every part of my plan, and anſwered every objection, which I think can be raiſed to it: I commit this to the public, as my firſt Eſſay, with fear and trembling. Conſcious of the novelty of my ſituation, may I hope that the *Higher powers* will not look with a diſcouraging eye on my attempt. I have always been too much careful, too much attention paid to every appearance of application, and a laudable ambition of excelling, to ſuppoſe, that they will obſtruct my harmleſs and inoffenſive endeavours. If they find any thing blameable, let

them conſider my age, and pardon it; if any thing praiſe-worthy, the good intent with which it was penn'd, and commend it. From my equals I look for ſtill greater indulgence and leſs ſeverity of criticiſm; let them read with candour and decide with impartiality, then I am not afraid of paſſing the ordeal of their judgment. The mind of youth is naturally too unbiaſs'd by prejudice, too ſuſceptible of generous ſentiments, to be unfavourable to one, whoſe only aim is their pleaſure and amuſement.

P. S. Whatever Perſons ſhould be inclined to favour the Author with their hints on any ſubject, they will be received and acknowledg'd with thankfulneſs. A letter directed to GREGORY GRIFFIN, the MICROCOSMOPOLITAN, and left at Mr. C. KNIGHT's, *Windſor*, will be ſafely deliver'd and no farther enquiries made, if the parties wiſh to remain concealed.

THE

MICROCOSM.

No. II.—MONDAY, *November* 13, 1786.

Jurare—et fallere Numen.——VIRGIL.
To ſwear and forſwear.

Nec ſine ulla mehercule ironia loquor.—CICERO.
To ſpeak ironically.

HAVING in my former paper, fully, and I hope ſatisfactorily, explained the nature and tendency of this work, and as far as I could foreſee them, anſwered, if not obviated all the objections moſt likely to be ſtarted againſt an undertaking of the kind, I ſhall forbear detaining my readers by any farther prefatory obſervations, and proceed immediately in the execution of my plan:—premiſing only, that, ſhould it appear to the elder part of my readers, that the

ſubject now before them is too lightly treated, I would not have them conclude from thence, that I am not well aware of its intrinſic weight and importance. Let them however be ſenſible, that *Gregory Griffin* does not, with the ſelf-aſſumed arrogance of an univerſal Cenſurer, commit to the public theſe his lucubrations as dictatorial lectures on morality, but as the reflections of an impartial obſerver of all tranſactions, principally indeed thoſe of this *leſſer world*, of which he boaſts himſelf a Citizen. Theſe, as they afforded both entertainment and inſtruction to him in their formation, he preſumes to hope may be the ſource of the one or the other to ſome of his readers. In this Character I would wiſh them to conſider me in the following paper, and withal to keep in their minds a maxim, indiſputable perhaps from the weight of its Authority,

——————————*Ridiculum acri*
Fortius, ac melius magnas plerumque ſecat res.
——————————*Where moral precepts fail,*
The ſneer of ridicule will oft prevail.

It has often occurred as a matter of ſurpriſe to me and a few friends, who like myſelf can find pleaſure in ſuch ſpeculations as ariſe more immediately

diately from common occurrences, that, among the crowds of pretenders, who profeſs to teach every accompliſhment, neceſſary or unneceſſary, to form the character of a complete gentleman, no one has as yet attempted to give inſtructions in a ſcience, the uſe of which is more generally adopted, by all ranks of people, than perhaps any other under the ſun.—The reader will probably gueſs, that I allude to the noble art of SWEARING.

So univerſally indeed does this practice prevail, that it pervades all ſtations and degrees of men, from the Peer to the Porter, from the Miniſter to the Mechanic. It is the bond of faith, the ſeal of proteſtations, (the oaths of lovers indeed are a theme too trite to need diſcuſſion here) and the univerſal Succedaneum for logical or even rational demonſtration. And here I cannot forbear reflecting on the infinite improvements made by moderns in the method of elucidating and confirming all matters of opinion. A man now-a-days has need but to acquire one quality, *Impudence*, and to get rid of a troubleſome companion, *Conſcience*, to eſtabliſh whatever maxims he may take in his head, let him but confirm with an oath the moſt improbable conjectures, and if any one calls his honour

honour in queſtion, the manner of ſettling all ſuch diſputes is too obvious to need explanation. And by theſe means how much unneceſſary trouble does he ſave the rational talents of his auditors; what a world of uſeleſs inveſtigation! Who can help lamenting that this method of arguing was not long ago adopted? We ſhould then probably have eſcaped being peſtered by the eternal diſputations of that uſeleſs ſet of creatures called Philoſophers; as any tolerable ſwordſman might have ſettled the univerſal ſyſtem according to his own plan, and made the planets move by what regulations he pleaſed, provided he was ready, in the *Newgate* phraſe, "*to ſwear through thick and thin.*"

But this is a ſmall part only of the advantages attendant on the extenſive practice of this art. In the councils of the cabinet, and the wranglings of the bar, it adds weight to the moſt ſtriking arguments, and by its authority enforces conviction.

It is an old proverbial expreſſion, that "*there go two words to a bargain;*" now I ſhould admire the ingenuity of that calculator, who could define, to any tolerable degree of exactneſs, how many *oaths* go to one in theſe days; for I am confident,

fident, that there is no buſineſs carried on, from the wealthieſt bargains of the Exchange, to the ſixpenny chafferings of a St. Giles's huckſter, in which ſwearing has not a conſiderable ſhare. And almoſt every tradeſman, "*meek and much a lyar,*" will, if his veracity be called in queſtion, coolly conſign to Satan ſome portion of himſelf, *payable on demand*, in caſe his goods be not found anſwerable to his deſcription of their quality.

I remember to have heard of a perſon of great talents for enquiry, who, to inform himſelf whether the land or the water bore the greater proportion in the Globe, contrived to cut out, with extreme nicety, from a map, the different portions of each, and by weighing them together, decided it, in favour of which it is not now material:—Could this experiment be made with regard to the proportion which oaths bear to the reſt of our modern converſation, I own I am not without my ſuſpicions, that the former ſcale would in ſome caſes preponderate; nay, certain I am, that theſe harmleſs expletives conſtitute conſiderably the *weightier* part in the diſcourſe of thoſe, who, either of their own ignorant vanity, or the contemptuous mock admiration of others, have been dig-

dignified with the title of BUCKS. And this indeed, as well in that ſmaller circle which falls more immediately under my obſervation, as in the more enlarged ſociety of *men*; among whom, to a BUCK who has the honour to ſerve his Majeſty, a habit of ſwearing is an appendage as abſolutely eſſential as a cockade or a commiſſion: And many a one there is among this order, who will ſit down with equal ardour and ſelf-complacency, to deviſe the cut of a coat, or the form of an execration.

Nay, even the *female* ſex have, to their no ſmall credit, caught the *happy contagion*; and there is ſcarce a Mercer's wife in the Kingdom, but has her innocent unmeaning imprecations, her little oaths "*ſoftened into nonſenſe*," and with ſqueaking treble, mincing blaſphemy into *odſbodikins*, *ſlitterkins*, and ſuch like, will "*ſwear you like a ſucking dove, ay, an it were any nightingale.*"

That it is one of the accompliſhments of *boys*, is more than ſufficiently obvious, when there is ſcarce one, though he be but five years old, that does not liſp out the oaths he has heard drop from the mouths of his elders; while the happy parent con-

congratulates himſelf on the early improvement of his offspring, and ſmiles, to diſcover the promiſing ſeeds of manly wit in the ſprightly ſallies of puerile execration. On which topic I remember to have heard an honeſt Hibernian divine, whoſe zeal for morality would ſometimes hurry him a little beyond the limits of good grammar or good ſenſe, in the height of declamation, declare, that "*the little children, that could neither ſpeak, nor walk, run about the ſtreets blaſpheming.*"

Thus then, through all ranks and ſtages of life, is Swearing the very hinge of converſation! It is the concluſive ſupplement to argument, the apology for wit, the univerſal medium through which every thought is conveyed; and as to the violent paſſions, it is (to uſe the words of the poet) "*the very midwife of the mind;*" and is equally ſerviceable in bringing forth the ſenſations of anger or kindneſs, hope or fear; the extacies of extravagant delights, or the agonies of comfortleſs deſpair. What mortal among us is there, that, when any misfortune comes on him unexpectedly, does not find himſelf wonderfully lightened of the load of his ſorrow, by pouring out the abundance of his vexation in ſhowers of curſes on the author of his

his calamity? What gameſter, who has reduced himſelf from opulence to beggary, by the intemperate indulgence of a mad infatuation, does not, after ſitting down and venting his execrations for half an hour againſt his ill fortune and his folly, get up again greatly relieved by ſo happy an expedient.

Since then the advantages ariſing from an early initiation into the practice of ſwearing muſt ſo evidently appear to every perſon unprejudiced againſt it, by notions (now indeed almoſt out of date) of religion and morality, I cannot but be ſurprized, that no one has as yet attempted to reduce to ſyſtem, and teach the theory of an art, the practical part of which is ſo univerſally known and adopted. An undertaking of this kind could not ſurely fail of ſucceſs; eſpecially in an age like this, when attempts of a much more arduous nature, are every day preſented to our notice: when pigs are brought to exerciſe all the functions of rationality; and Hibernians profeſs to teach the true pronunciation of the Engliſh tongue.

It is not ſo very far removed, but that ſome of my readers muſt recollect the time, when the noble art

art of *boxing*, was, by the ever-memorable FIGG and BROUGHTON, reduced to a complete and perfect ſyſtem; and the Nobility and Gentry were taught theoretically as well as practically, to bruiſe the bodies, and (to uſe a technical term) *darken the daylights* of each other, with the vigour of a Hercules, tempered with the grace of an Apollo. And it is but a little time, ſince a celebrated Foreigner actually inſtructed ſome perſons, of no inconſiderable rank, of both ſexes, in the art of *eating Soup* with eaſe and dexterity; (though in my humble opinion, few people could need a preceptor to ſhew them the way to their mouths.) —Of much more utility, and ſurely not leſs ſucceſsful would be the plan I recommend.—Many there were, who, from tenderneſs of age, or delicacy of conſtitution, were precluded from the diverſion of *boxing*: to many the Science of *ſoup-eating* was uſeleſs and impracticable,—merely from having none to eat;—but all have their *oaths* in their own power, and of them neither emptineſs of pocket, nor corporeal or mental imbecility prevent the free and uncontrouled uſe; and almoſt every body, however niggardly he may be in parting with any other of his poſſeſſions, ſcatters theſe with the moſt liberal profuſion.

Thus

Thus then, if foſtered by the hand of a ſkilful linguiſt, this Science might perhaps in time come nearer than any other to realize the extravagant idea of the ingenious but romantic Biſhop Wilkins, of an univerſal language. At preſent indeed there are ſome ſlight inconveniencies attending the project, among which no ſmall one is, that according to their preſent general uſage, Oaths, like Yorick's French Frizeur, by expreſſing too much generally mean nothing: inſomuch that I now make it a rule to leſſen my belief to every aſſertion, in proportion to the number of needleſs corroborative oaths by which it is ſupported. Nor am I indeed unreaſonable in this; and in moſt caſes how can I do otherwiſe? Is it in human nature to ſuppoſe, that when one of my friends declares his joy at ſeeing me, and his kind concern for my health, by intimating a hearty wiſh of my eternal perdition, that he really means what he ſays?

It has been obſerved by ſome ancient Philoſopher, or Poet, or Moraliſt, (no matter which) that nothing could be more pernicious to mankind, than the fulfilling of their own wiſhes. And in truth I am inclined to be of his opinion; for many

a friend of mine, many a *fellow-citizen of this leſſer world,* would, had his own heedleſs imprecations on himſelf taken effect, long ere this have groaned under the complication of almoſt every calamity capable of entering a human imagination. And with regard to the world at large, were this to be the caſe, I doubt whether there would be at this preſent time a leg or limb of any kind whole in his Majeſty's ſervice. So habitual indeed was this cuſtom become to an Officer of my acquaintance, that though he had loſt one of his eyes in the defence of his Country, he could not forego his favourite execration, but ſtill uſed to vent his curſes on them both, with the ſame eaſe and indifference as when they were both in his poſſeſſion: So *blind* was he rendered to his own defects, by the continued practice of this—amuſement. For in no other light than as an amuſement or a polite accompliſhment can it be conſidered by thoſe who practice it. Did they conſider it as a vice, they could not I am ſure perſevere in the indulgence of one, which has not even the common excuſe of having for its aim the purſuit of pleaſure, or the gratification of a darling appetite. I cannot believe they would ſo diſintereſtedly damn themſelves, and vent in public company ſuch imprecations,

cations, as in darkneſs and ſolitude they would tremble to conceive.

As an accompliſhment therefore, and as an agreeable indication of youthful gaiety it muſt no doubt be conſidered;—and ſhould any one take the hint here offered him, and commence inſtructor in this noble Science, I need not, I believe, caution him againſt being an Engliſhman; or (ſhould he have the misfortune to be born in this country, remind him of the eaſy transformation of our commoneſt home-ſpun names, into the more faſhionable French, or more muſical Italian; as for inſtance, that of Peters into Pedro, Nicholls into Nicolini, or Gerard into Girardot, and ſo on:—Having thus *un-engliſhed* himſelf, let him get his advertiſement drawn up in the Grahamic ſtyle, if not by the Doctor himſelf, profeſſing, that

" Having added to the early advantages of
" a Billingſgate education, the deepeſt re-
" ſearches, and moſt indefatigable induſtry,
" &c. &c. he now ſtands forth as an apt and
" accompliſhed teacher of the never-to-be-
" ſufficiently extolled, the all-expreſſive, all-
" comprehenſive, &c. &c. *Art of Swearing*.
" Ladies and Gentlemen inſtructed in the
" moſt

"moſt faſhionable and elegant oaths; the "moſt peculiarly adapted to their ſeveral "ages, manners, and profeſſions, &c. &c. "He has now ready for the preſs, a book en- "titled, *The Complete Oath Regiſter*; or, *Every "Man his own Swearer*, containing oaths and "imprecations for all times, ſeaſons, pur- "poſes, and occaſions: Alſo, *Sentimental "Oaths for the Ladies*. Likewiſe *Execrations "for the Year* 1786."

Let him, I ſay, do this, and he may, I believe, aſſure himſelf of no little encouragement among the world at large; though far be it from me to preſume to promiſe him any extraordinary countenance in that ſmaller Circle which comes more immediately under the inſpection of the MICROCOSMOPOLITAN. B.

NOTES to CORRESPONDENTS.

TRANSLATICUS's requeſt ſhould have been immediately attended to, had not this Number been previouſly ſent to the Preſs.---It is not in my power to inſert the favour of my "*never fading*" admirer, OBADIAH MEANWELL, as the ſubject has been before treated of, and his alluſions are too local.

THE

MICROCOSM.

No. III.—MONDAY, *November* 20, 1786

Ceſſare, et ludere, et ungi.—HOR.
To lounge, and loiter, and perfume.

"DEAR GREG,

"YOUR Mic. is *dead Lounge*,—diſſipates "inſufferable *Ennui* of tea table,—fills "boring intervals of *Converſazione*,—Ex- "quiſite ſubſtitute for ſwitch,—and in ſhort quite "the Ton:—By the by, in your next propoſe "ſome new *Lounge*.—They are all ſo *dingle* at "preſent, they are quite a *Bore*.—Lud, how much "I have written!—You charming creature, hint "ſome new Lounge.

"Your's,

"NARCISSUS."

Nar-

Narciſſus's billet doux has led me into ſome reflections on the tenets of thoſe Philoſophers, (for I would not ſpeak of ſo large a portion of our leſſer world's inhabitants by a leſs reſpectable title) who profeſs in its different branches the doctrine of Apathy.

We find, that the walking and ſitting diſputants into which the beards of Greece were divided, originated indeed from one root: but afterwards branched into ſuch innumerable little ſprays, and ſo interſected each other, as not only to prevent all poſſibility of fruit, but when agitated by the leaſt wind of contention, to fall together with a dry, offenſive ſort of creaking, of that kind which Virgil deſcribes by the *Aridus Fragor*. Senſible that theſe diſagreeable effects proceeded from a ridiculous notion which each Metaphyſical innovator entertained of improving on the doctrines of his predeceſſors, (men much older, and in courſe much wiſer than himſelf) the founder of the ſect of *Apathiſts* has condeſcended to borrow this opinion from the great Grecian Maſter, that *the end of Knowledge is to be certified that we know nothing*. Upon this tenet he logically and ingeniouſly builds an argument, which tends to ſupport his main

principle, viz. The ſummit of *Knowing* is to *Know* that *Knowledge* is a Non Entity. The idea of total ignorance cannot but be grating to the pride of a human creature; Ergo, ſhould we not at once embrace a doctrine which ſaves us this reflection, by teaching us to believe that we know a great deal? Now this belief is the invariable characteriſtic of an Apathiſt; for an attempt at improvement would be in him, what an acknowledgement of conviction would formerly have been conſidered in the Stoic.

Not however entirely to preclude the idea of ſtudy, and at the ſame time to point out to his followers ſuch a kind of purſuit as ſhould neither impair the delicacy of their external texture, or interrupt their flow of animal ſpirits by head achs, vapours, and other nervous diſorders, (the inſeparable companions of intenſe application) this great founder has adopted the pithy precept of a brother legiſlator, and enjoins his followers to *Know themſelves*.—Themſelves therefore, ſtrictly obedient to this injunction, and themſelves alone, they ſtudy. The vulgar herd of Mortals are blinded by Ambition, elated by Hope, depreſſed by Fear, melted by Love, tortured by Jealouſy, and

and in ſhort racked by all the viciſſitudes of the more violent, or agitated by the quick tranſitions of the ſofter paſſions. There are thoſe who would hear of the enfranchiſement of Greece, and the deſolation of the Palatinate, with the ſame emotion; and diſtinguiſh no eſſential difference in the characters of Alexander and Uncle Toby: But even theſe would be infinitely diſordered to find the œconomy of their apartments deranged by an unlucky Kitten, almoſt faint at a broken pane, and be abſolutely taken ill of an everted coal-box. The *genuine Apathiſt* alone, equally ſuperior to the violent attacks of paſſion, and the teazing impertinence of fretfulneſs, has, notwithſtanding theſe advantages, condeſcenſion ſufficient to confine himſelf to the humbler ſphere of the ſocial duties; that is, he eats and drinks with the moſt refined politeneſs; and would rather forfeit his exiſtence than be guilty of ſuch a ſoleciſm in good breeding, as to drain a tea-pot, or repleniſh his own cup before thoſe of his companions.

Not but he frequently exerciſes functions of a different nature, and *perſonates* the Man of Taſte, the Genius, and the Critic; (nay, there have been known thoſe who have entertained certain vague no-

tions of a groveling quality called *Common ſenſe.)* He has in ſhort the reputation of being every thing, with the ſatisfaction of being nothing. I have known a complete adept in the external forms required on ſuch an occaſion, by one ſhort ſentence (carefully omitting the Articles, Pronouns, and Verb Subſtantive) eſtabliſh or deſtroy the fame of the moſt capital hoſiers. And any one who is acquainted with the ſigns whereby to diſtinguiſh them, may not unfrequently ſee the moſt eminent among them in yawning majeſty, gaping out the character of an unread author to their aſtoniſhed retainers.

Wit indeed is a bagatelle for which they ſeem to entertain the utmoſt averſion, and to diſcourage not only among their own body, but in any promiſcuous company into which they may chance to be thrown; and this, not by the trite path of ſtale dogmatical precepts, but by the more uncommon and ſtriking method of example. And to ſhew how ſucceſsful is this plan, I will venture to aſſert, that any one who ſhould hear but a ſingle jeſt of a genuine Apathiſt, would, for at leaſt a week afterwards, be thoroughly convinced of the impropriety of being facetious.

But

But as in this tenet I perfectly agree with the Apathiſt, that "*example ſtrikes where precept fails*," it will perhaps more clearly than any deſcription of mine, illuſtrate the true character of what is called in the phraſe of our citizens a *Dead Lounger*, to lay before them a ſecond favour of my old friend and correſpondent Narciſſus. It is a journal of his Sunday's employment; and if I may judge from the compleat ſyſtem which it contains, muſt be the production of a profound adept. He deſires my deciſion on his plan of life; but as I am not yet grown callous in the office of a Cenſor, I conſign him to the cuſtomary method of trial by a jury of his *Peers*.

"DEAR GREG,

"To diſſipate *Vapeur* what remedy d'ye think "have choſen? To write journal, He! He! He! "Want to know how I kill time; your opinion,

"Your's,

"NARCISSUS."

"*Sunday Morning, Half paſt Nine.* Yawned;— "execrably ſleepy.

Ten. Read half your bill.—Head ach.

" *Half paſt Ten.* Too cold for church.—Head ach " increaſed by bell.—N. B. To change my apart- " ment that I may avoid that noiſe.

" *Eleven to Twelve.* Took my chocolate.—Read " half a page of Henrietta Harville.—Mem. Never " to read Sentimental Novels after the 1ſt. of May, " or before 1ſt. of November.

" *Twelve.* Terrace,—not a ſoul.—On my re- " turn ſaw cocked hat with man under it.

" *Half paſt One.* Dinner.—No appetite.

" *Two.* Froth called.—Argument with Froth " on long quarter'd ſhoes.—N. B. Froth diſmally " in the wrong.

" *Three to Four.* Slept.—Dreamt of Butterflies.

" *Four.* Dreſs'd for Caſtle prayers.

" *Half paſt Four.* Lounged with Froth to Caſtle " prayers.—'Stoniſhing *Rou.*—Man in Buzz wig.— " Fribble in thread ſtockings.—Mem. Froth and " ſelf to drop his acquaintance.—Mem. Broke little " boy's head.—Mem. Gave the dog a ſhilling.

" *Half paſt Five.* Sipped my tea with Feather.— " N. B. His ſilk ſtockings.—N. B. The pattern ſeen " laſt Winter in town.—N. B. Not to tell him till " he has worn them.

" *Six to Half paſt.* Yawned and Rou'd.

" *Half paſt to Seven.* Rou'd and Yawned.

" *Seven*

" *Seven to Eight.* Got vapours by looking out " Microcoſm.

" *Eight to Nine.* Wrote my journal.—Buckled " my ſhoe.

" *Nine to Ten.* Intolerable Vapours.—N. B. Va- " pours greateſt bore in Univerſe.

" *Ten to half paſt.* Lounged to Dapper's room.— " Caught him reading Latin.—Smoked him.— " Rou'd him.—Mem. Dapper in covered buttons. " —*O imitatores, ſer, ſer, ſer,* Lud, my memory! " Do you remember the line in Virgil, Greg?

" *Half paſt Ten to Eleven.* Put on ſlippers and " night gown.—Picked teeth.

" *Eleven to Twelve.* Went to bed."

As an acknowledgement for the aſſiſtance Narciſſus has afforded me, it is but reaſonable that I ſhould, as far as lies in my power, comply with his concluding requeſt of his firſt billet. There is at preſent a vacant ſeat in the *Lounging club*, occaſioned by the expulſion of one of its members for explaining a paſſage in Horace. As far as mental qualifications have any weight in the ſcale, he is perfectly adapted to fill the chair. The honour of being a candidate, was, by the unanimous votes of the ſociety, conferred on the Microcoſmopolitan; and an evening accordingly fixed for my

examination. Having received timely notice of their intentions, I prepared myſelf accordingly; and at about half paſt four was uſhered into an apartment, in which at a modeſt diſtance from a tea equipage, were ſeated five reſpectable perſonages.

Now, gentle Reader, before I proceed in the account of my reception, it is neceſſary that I premiſe, that it is not the mere mechanical qualities of an Author, which have induced me to aſſume the character of a MICROCOSMOPOLITAN; but that as my predeceſſor with the ſhort face, derived perhaps more dignity from that diſtinguiſhing feature which was to ſet him apart from the reſt of mankind, than from any obſervation in his whole work, ſo nature ſeems to have cut me out for a periodical writer, by endowing a long noſe of mine with ſo ſtrange a predilection for my chin, as on moſt occaſions to form no very harmonious cadence in my organs of elocution.

"*Hinc mihi prima mali labes: Hence the firſt origin of all my ill:*" For when in return to the extravagant politeneſs of the whole room, I began to attempt ſomething like a compliment, it had ſo viſible an effect on the nerves of my audience, that

that forgetting the etiquette of receiving a ſtranger, they with one accord applied their hands to the offended ſeat of hearing. Nay, ſo violent were the emotions of one of them, that he ſprung acroſs the table with the agility of a monkey, articulating, as well as the chattering of his teeth would allow him, "*I hope in Gad the animal is ta—a—ame.*" An univerſal titter was the immediate conſequence of this ejaculation, when the preſident turning to me with a ſelf complacent apologizing ſimper, obſerved, that "*I muſt excuſe Mr. Tinſel's oddities, as I ſhould find him upon the whole a lounging Creeter.*" Upon my bowing, a general ſilence enſued, till one of the company, in a voice which left me to doubt whether he was broad awake, yawned out, "*Tinſel, you have wetted my ſtocking.*" The whole room, except Tinſel, (whoſe late alarm had forced him to have recourſe to an adjacent lavender bottle) as if they had preconcerted a reply, reiterated *Twaddle.* So general an exclamation in a term which came nearer to *Waddle* than any thing I had any idea of, I miſtook for a perſonal application to me, till I ſaw the harmleſs creatures unanimouſly applying their white handkerchiefs to the injured ſtocking.

As ſoon as this important concern was adjuſted, the preſident, addreſſing himſelf to me, told me, He had peruſed the title page of my work, and was much pleaſed with the ſtyle; that the deſign, as explained there was exquiſite; that having, by an unfortunate accident loſt one of their number, they had unanimouſly agreed to make me the offer of his ſeat. And that ſhould I myſelf ſtart any objections to the propoſals, they wiſhed to make my paper the medium for publiſhing this vacancy to the world; "One thing, added he, Mr. Griffin, this ſociety and myſelf have been ineffably puzzled on, which is, whether your plan is grounded on Perſonal Satire or no?" Having made my acknowledgements to the company in general for the intended honour, I replied, that when it ſhould be convenient to him to favour my firſt paper with a peruſal, his objection would anſwer itſelf: That at preſent I ſhould only aſſure him, that on my ſide, nothing more than general alluſions were intended, and on that of my fellow-citizens, "*Qui capit ille facit; Let the gall'd jade wince.*"

I had ſcarce pronounced theſe words when I became ſenſible of my careleſſneſs by the ſignificant looks

looks of the company. The converſation immediately turned on ſtockings; when, as I was out of my element, I ſat for ſome time totally ſilent; and upon a proper opportunity took my leave, and retired to reflect on the ſcene I had quitted. On coming home I found Narciſſus's letters, and diveſting myſelf of all the petulance of a diſappointed candidate, ſat down immediately to advertize him of this opportunity. Convinced, notwithſtanding the plauſible arguments of thoſe, who under the immediate impulſe of any favourite paſſion, cannot brook the idea of total liſtleſſneſs, that an Apathiſt is as much a real, as a GRIFFIN is an imaginary being. C.

NOTES to CORRESPONDENTS.

My ailing myſelf of the permiſſion of OCTAVIUS, I [illegible] adapt his letter to the limits of my work, and [illegible] take the ſame liberty with that of MUSIDORUS. My *viſionary* friend, who ſigns himſelf AN ETONIAN, has expreſs'd himſelf in ſuch a ſtrain of encomium, as I could not inſert without incurring the imputation of vanity.

THE MICROCOSM.

No. IV.—MONDAY, *November* 27, 1786.

I demens et sævas curre per Alpes,
Ut Pueris placeas & declamatio fias.—JUVENAL.

Climb o'er the Alps, thou rash ambitious fool,
To please the boys and be a theme at School.—DRYDEN.

AS the subject of the following discourse is the examination of a passion more peculiarly prevalent in the minds of youth; and as I conceive it would be but an indifferent compliment to the talents of the younger part of my readers, to consider it necessary to apologize to them for the more serious nature of it; I shall, without detaining them any further by unnecessary introduction, proceed to my subject, *the Love of Fame*. And this I consider not only as that exalted principle, which has in all ages produced patriots and heroes, but when in a depraved state, contributing more perhaps to the promotion of immorality, than our most violent passions and most craving appetites.

For the obſerver will diſcover, that whenever this *primum mobile* of the mind is diverted from the purſuit of more laudable ambition, to the deſire of falſe honour, and criminal adulation its tendency is *only* diverted while its power remains unimpaired. This principle, capable of carrying us to the higheſt pitch of human ambition, or, on the other hand ſinking us to the loweſt ebb of depravity, is implanted in our natures; it is inherent in, and inſeparable from humanity; the reins are thrown into our hands, and the reſt remains with ourſelves.

It ſhould ſeem then, that a reaſonable being, conſcious that he is poſſeſſed of ſuch an internal principle, aware of the conſequences immediately depending on a proper or improper uſe of it, and having the direction of it in his own power, could hardly err in the application: But unfortunately it happens, that the diſtribution of praiſe lies equally in the hands of all; and from hence it is, that the commonalty derive a power, for which they are far from being qualified by greater nicety of judgment or accuracy of obſervation. And theſe, too frequently judging more from outward appearance than an inveſtigation of intrinſic merit,

it will happen, that by far the greater ſhare of glory attends upon what are called great actions; which, by their ſuperior ſplendor, attract and dazzle the eyes of the multitude more than a ſober train of benevolence, which paſſes over the mind with the ſmooth uniformity of a poliſhed ſurface, not marked by any eminent feature, or diſtinguiſhed by any leading characteriſtic. Hence, a wide barrier is fixt between actions glorious to the individual, and ſuch as are uſeful to the community; and the effects produced by it are not ſo much to be wondered at as lamented. The life of a man beneficial to ſociety, is moſt commonly paſt in a continued ſeries of benevolent actions, frequently in a circle extremely contracted; but this is not a life of glory, and tho' an uſeful uniformity may demand our praiſe, it lays no claim to our admiration. So unvaried indeed is the tenour of a life really uſeful, and not unuſually charged with ſo little incident, that the muſe, whoſe office it is to ſhed a perfunctory tear over the aſhes of the deceaſed, has frequently been obliged, by the barrenneſs of the ſubject, to have recourſe to topics of praiſe entirely fictitious; or relinquiſh a theme rendered ſo unintereſting by its uniformity. And if we except that of Pope on Mrs. Corbet, and

and the original of Craſhaw, from which Pope ſeems to have transfuſed no inconſiderable part of his own performance, there does not perhaps remain in our language, an elegant epitaph on any perſon undiſtinguiſhed by military, civil, or literary exertions. I would wiſh however to except the following lines, which, in a pariſh in Yorkſhire, cover the bones of an honeſt yeoman; whoſe merit ſeems to have been underſtood by the author, tho' he might have been prevented from recurring to feigned topics by the want of art evident in the conſtruction of the lines.—I ſhall ſubject them to the peruſal of my reader; they are as follow;

John Bell Brokenbow
Laies under this ſtane,
Four of my eene ſonnes
Laied it on my weame,
I was maſter of my meat,
Maſter of my wife,
I lived on my own lands
Without mickle ſtrife.

How much more glorious is this ſimple teſtimony to the undiſtinguiſhed merits of a private man, than if it had announced the bones of a general,

general, who by the ſingular favour of fortune, had, with the loſs of only twenty thouſand individuals of the ſame country with himſelf, ſlaughtered two hundred thouſand, guilty of being divided from it by a narrow ſea, or a chain of mountains. The merit of the former character is evidently ſuperior; yet our admiration had undoubtedly ſided with the latter.

Not that this meritorious inaction is always undiſtinguiſhed by obſervation and applauſe; the character of Atticus, is not perhaps leſs remarkable for its literary excellence, than the inactive acquieſcence which he betrayed at a period when any degree of eminence muſt have been attended with conſequences more or leſs repugnant to the intereſts of his country. How different is this patriotic conqueſt over a deſire of glory not to be obtained in a manner conſiſtent with his country's welfare, from the obſtinacy of another character equally eminent about the ſame time, who would have

"Bluſh'd if Cato's houſe had ſtood,
"Secure, and flouriſhed in a civil war."

It ſhould ſeem doubtful whether the poet meant this ſentiment for the effect of a natural impulſe on the occaſion which introduces it, or the reſult

of

of an affectation eminent in the original character; and which could not have escaped the author tho' so much its admirer: Certain I am, that it could not proceed from the feelings of nature, even admitting the possibility of any connection subsisting between an individual and his country, which did not in a stronger manner tie him to his family. I shall not at present arraign the policy which dictated a law to the Athenians, inflicting disgrace and ignominy on any one who in a public dissention might remain inactive; however, the observer may discover in this edict, the source of those disturbances which continually divided the state, and ended but in its ruin.

But to return to my subject, and perhaps it may not be entirely foreign from it, to observe, that admitting the desire of glory to have so great an influence as I contend it is possessed of; the higher ranks in life may be cleared of an imputation under which they have long laboured. I allude to an opinion extremely prevalent, that all national depravity and corruption, before it descends to the lower classes, originates among their superiors. The regard paid by the lower ranks to the example and authority of their superiors, has been cited,

and

and with ſome degree of plauſibility, to ſupport this opinion; but is not this influence effectually and entirely counterbalanced, by the diſtribution of cenſure and applauſe which reſides entirely in the hands of the commonalty? or can any one doubt the influence which the common people have with their ſuperiors, when he ſees the forms of government change with the diſpoſition of the people; and the affectation of ignorance and illiberality aſſumed by the higher orders at home, in their dreſs, manners, and converſation? We readily grant a propenſity in the inferior orders to imitate the actions of their ſuperiors; but is not imitation the height of flattery? and does not a readineſs to receive and copy the depraved manners of a ſuperior order, ſuppoſe a previous depravity in the people?

Perhaps the only true criterion of the utility or dangerous tendency of this paſſion, is the diſpoſition of the times; for the ſame ſpirit which in a more corrupt period carries the enthuſiaſt for it to the height of exceſs and extravagance, would, in an æra of more ſimple manners, have produced the exact reverſe;

"*Lucullus, when frugality could charm,*
"*Had roaſted turnips in his ſabine farm.*"

and

and Cincinnatus, had he lived in a period leſs diſpoſed to honour a virtuous poverty, might probably have changed the frugality of his ſimple meal, for the luxury of the *Apollo*.

The preſent path to glory, and conſequently that which its votaries purſue, is faction; and even in this leſſer world the obſerver may diſcover a demagogue in embryo, diſtinguiſhed perhaps only for ſtronger powers of vociferation. But here, as upon all other occaſions, the MICROCOSMOPOLITAN would wiſh to avoid miſapprehenſion, and while he reprobates a turbulence of behaviour, does not wiſh his readers entirely to diſcard their judgment and free will, and to degrade themſelves to the rank of non-entities, or, according to a more accepted phraſe, *cyphers*. The great increaſe of the abovementioned ſpecies calls for attention; whether it proceeds from a prevailing idea that an individual, like a numerical figure, is made of more conſequence by the addition of a cypher, or from a fear in its promoters, of a diſcovery of their own weakneſs; as the cruel policy of Semiramis had its origin in an apprehenſion, that her ſex might be diſcovered by an unprecedented want of beard. From whatever cauſe

the

the preſent increaſe of this ſpecies ariſes, it is now grown to ſo formidable an height, as to require the attention of the public, and more particularly of the MICROCOSMOPOLITAN.

I would wiſh to preſent to the peruſal of my readers, the following lines, not entirely foreign from ſome part of this eſſay; and at the ſame time admoniſh them, that the ſmile of Melpomene at the birth of a poet is uſeleſs, without that of his readers on his publication.

I.

Within the ſounding quiver's hollow womb
Repoſe the darts of praiſe and harmony;
Goddeſs draw forth the choſen ſhaft; at whom
Shall the ſwift arrows of the muſes fly?
By the great almighty mind,
For man's highly favour'd race,
Various bleſſings were deſign'd,
Bounties of ſuperior grace;
Here the fat and fertile ground
Waves the flood of Harveſt round
Or fervid wine's extatic juice
Cluſter-curved Vines produce;

A ſullen land of lazy lakes
The Rhine ſlowly winding to the Ocean makes,
This reſcued from the eager wave
Human art has dar'd to ſave,
While o'er each foggy pool and cheerleſs fen
Hums the buſy buz of men.
A warlike nation bent on deathful deeds
From daring actions ſafety ſeeks, and fame,
Ruſh thro' the ranks, where'er the battle bleeds,
Or whirl their neighing courſers thro' the flame.
The Indian youth beneath the ſhade
More loves repoſe and peace,
And underneath his plantain laid
Sings indolence and eaſe.

II.

Thus far with unerring hand
All ruling providence has plann'd,
Thus far impartial to divide
Not all to one, nor one to all denied.
But Order, heav'n-deſcended queen,
Where'er you deign to go,
Alone you fix the bounds between
Our happineſs and woe,
Nor wealth, nor peace, nor without thee
Heav'n's firſt beſt bounty, Liberty,
Can bleſs our native land.

Then

Then come, O nymph! and o'er this iſle
Diſpenſe thy ſoul ſubduing ſmile,
And ſtretch thy lenient hand.

III.

Before time was, before the Day
Shot thro' the ſkies his golden ray,
A ſightleſs maſs, a wafteful wild
Tumultuous gulph, was all this fair creation,
Till you the ſhapeleſs chaos reconcil'd,
Each part commanding to its proper ſtation!
Then hills upheav'd their verdant head,
Above a purer ſky was ſpread,
And Ocean floated in his ample bed:
Then firſt creeping to the main
Rivers drew their tortuous train;
Then from her fertile womb the earth
Brought forth at one ample birth,
All that through the waſte of ſky
Borne on oary pinions fly,
Or thro' the deep's dark caverns roam,
And wallowing daſh the ſea to foam
Tutor'd by your guiding ſway,
The planets trace their pathleſs way,
The ſeaſons in their order'd dance
In grateful interchange advance!

But

But when, O Goddeſs, wilt thou deign,
O'er favour'd man to ſtretch thy reign?
Then ſhall ſedition's tempeſt ceaſe,
The daſhing ſtorm be huſh'd to peace,
The angry ſeas no longer roar,
But gently rolling kiſs the ſhore,
While from the wave-worn rock the troubled
waters pour.

IV.

When pois'd athwart the lurid air,
The ſword of vengeance pours a ſanguine ray,
Or comets from their ſtream of blazing hair
Shake the blue peſtilence, and adverſe ſway
Of refluous battle, o'er ſome high vic'd land;
Thro' the ſick air the power of poiſon flies,
By gentler breezes now no longer fann'd,
Sultry and ſtill; the native breathes and dies.
Yet often free from ſelfiſh fear
The ſon attends his father's bed,
Nor will diſdain the ſocial tear
In pleaſing painful mood to ſhed.—
When chilling pine and cheerleſs penury,
Stretch o'er ſome needy houſe their wither'd hand
Where modeſt want alone retires to die,
Yet ſocial love hath ſhed her influence bland,
To cheer the ſullen gloom of poverty.

For

For 'tis decreed, that every ſocial joy,
In its partition ſhould be multiplied,
Still be the ſame nor know the leaſt alloy,
Tho' ſympathy to thouſands ſhould divide
Our pleaſures; but when urg'd by dire diſtreſs,
The grief by others felt is made the leſs.

V.

Not ſo the ills ſedition ſows,
Midſt ſever'd friends and kindred foes;
When the horrid joy of all,
Embitters ev'ry private fall.
Creeping from her ſecret ſource
Sedition holds her ſilent courſe,
With wat'ry weeds and ſordid ſedge
Skirting her unnoted edge,
Till ſcorning all her former bounds
She ſweeps along the fertile grounds;
And as in ſullen ſolemn ſtate ſhe glides,
Receives into her train the tributary tides;
Then ruſhing headlong from ſome craggy ſteep
She pours impetuous down and hurries to the deep.
Ah! luckleſs he, who o'er the tide
Shall hope his fragile bark to guide;
While ſecure his ſail is ſpread
The waves ſhall thunder o'er his head;

But

But if, long tempeſt-toſt, once more,
His crazy bark regain the ſhore,
There ſhall he ſit and long lament
His youthful vigour vainly ſpent;
And others warn, but warn, alas in vain,
In unambitious ſafety to remain.
Then happy he! who to the gale
Nor truſts too much the varying ſail,
Nor raſhly launching forth amain
Attempts the terrors of the wat'ry plain;
But watchful, wary, when he ſees
The ocean black beneath the breeze,
The cheerleſs ſky with clouds o'erſpread,
And darkneſs gath'ring round his head,
Truſts not too far but haſtes to ſeek,
The ſhelter of ſome winding creek;
Thence ſees the waves by whirlwinds toſt,
And raſh ambition's veſſel loſt;
Hears the mad pilot late deplore,
The ſhifting ſail, the faithleſs oar,
And hears the ſhriek of death, the ſhriek that's
heard no more.

THE MICROCOSM.

No. V.—MONDAY, *December* 4, 1786.

Animo umbris rerum ſatisfacere.

BACON, *de Augm. Scien.*

To ſatisfy the mind with ſpeculation.

Oppida quodam tempore florentiſſima, nunc proſtrata et diruta ante oculos jacent.——SULP. *ad Cic.*

The ruins of Cities formerly flouriſhing and powerful, now lie ſcattered before my eyes.

AS I am naturally of a thoughtful and ſpeculative turn of mind, it is a favourite amuſement with me, not only to traverſe the well known regions of Ancient Hiſtory, but to launch into the wider ocean of conjecture, and explore in fancy, the *Terra incognita* of probability. In the courſe of theſe researches,

ſearches, the mind expatiates in a larger field, than the narrow and confined limits of known facts will otherwiſe permit it; in one caſe the inexhauſtible ſtores of a fertile imagination ſupply abundant materials to our ſpeculations; and we are left at full liberty to form air-drawn ſyſtems, and build impracticable theories as extravagant as the wildeſt flights of fancy could ever ſuggeſt: and this has been the favourite, tho' perhaps uſeleſs, employment of many ingenious men, and is an innocent at leaſt, and copious ſource of amuſement, which fills up the languid intervals of a leiſure hour. The Atalantis of Plato, the Utopia of Sir Thomas More, and the Oceana of Dr. Harrington, fall (ſit verbo venia) under the deſcription of air-drawn and impracticable, tho' ingenious ſyſtems. In the other caſe, we are confined to the limits of authenticated Hiſtory, and Fancy makes a vain effort to burſt thoſe chains, which knowledge and truth have impoſed upon her; we can only reflect, and draw uſeful inferences from the various events which crowd the hiſtoric page; from the various calamities which the treachery, the ambition, and the crimes of one ſmall part of mankind have undeſervedly drawn down on the infinitely larger portion that remains.

This

This is in part the opinion of one of the moſt learned and ingenious men of our age; what he applies to the difference between poetry and hiſtory, I ſhall apply to that between hiſtory and conjecture.

* "*Nimium auguſtis finibus continetur Hiſtoria, ni-mium ſeveras habet operis ſui leges. Res geſtas tradit, eventorum veſtigiis inſiſtit: quod contigit, non quod contigiſſe* potuit *aut oportuit narrandum, nec quo documenti opportunitas, aut* probabilitatis *ratio vocat, ſed quo facti neceſſitas cogit, eundum. Hiſtoria res et perſonas certas et conſtitutas tractat, infinitas et univerſales Poeſis: illa præſcriptum iter certâ conficit via, hæc liberis naturæ ſpatiis fruitur.*"

"Hiſtory is confined within too narrow limits, is bound by too ſevere reſtrictions; ſhe records tranſactions, and adheres to the traces of paſt deeds; ſhe relates what has, not what *might* or ought to have happened; ſhe is to follow, not where an opportunity of drawing a moral inference, or venturing a *probable conjecture* calls her, but where the neceſſity of relating a fact compels her. Hiſtory treats of particular and determined characters; Poetry comprehends thoſe of every de-

* *Lowth de Poeſi Hebræorum.*

deſcription: The one finiſhes her allotted journey by a certain road; the other expatiates in the ample field of unbounded nature."

But even the hiſtoric field is an extenſive range for the moſt comprehenſive mind; and the ſagacious reflections of learning on ſo copious a ſubject, have filled the volumes of knowledge and philoſophy. But to exerciſe the ſpeculative powers of the mind, is to me at leaſt a more pleaſing employment, eſpecially if forming our judgment from the paſt events of antiquity, and aſſerting, what is ſurely no extravagant aſſertion, that ſimilar cauſes will produce ſimilar effects, we thence deduce the moſt probable conſequences: And thus tempering the licenciouſneſs of conjecture with the caution of experience, form that hypotheſis, which according to the general courſe o human events, and with due allowance for thoſe unexpected incidents which often give the deciſive bias to the moſt important tranſactions, is leaſt liable to objection, and the moſt probable conſequence of a given propoſition.

Indulging this favourite propenſity, I grounded the following ſpeculation on the extract from

Sulpicius's conſolatory letter to Cicero, which is prefixed to this eſſay.

When I reflect on the fate of the different Empires, which have at various periods enſlaved mankind; when I conſider thoſe ſtupendous frames of political mechaniſm, which have ſo long engaged the attention and claimed the admiration of the Philoſopher and Speculatiſt, but whoſe remaining veſtiges are to be traced only in the records of Hiſtory, or diſcoverable in the magnificent ruins of deſolated countries; I cannot but ſuppoſe, that a ſimilar fate awaits the now flouriſhing nations of the civilized world: An event, that will moſt probably take place in ſome diſtant period, when the Sun of Science will be again obſcured in the ſhades of ignorance, and once more be immerſed in primitive barbariſm.

The Empires of Aſſyria, Babylon, and Perſia, once fondly flattered themſelves, that their ſplendor would be as laſting as the frame of the Univerſe; and the Roman had a ſtill ſtronger claim to immortality; as, by comprehending the whole then known globe within its boundaries, it ſeemed to be equally ſecure from the impetuous violence

of an open enemy, or the more certain, tho' ſlower operations of the great deſtroyer, Time.

When thoſe "Subverters of Nations," and "ſcourges in the hand of God," as they were emphatically ſtiled by the contemporary Hiſtorians, who ſo ſenſibly felt the calamities they deſcribed, an Attila or an Alaric had overturned this mighty fabric; its disjointed members were divided into numberleſs diſtinct bodies; from one or the other of which many of the preſent European Powers derive their origin. The Lombards, Goths, and Huns, are inſtances too well known to need further illuſtration; one alone is ſufficient; the preſent Emperors of Germany are, or pretend to be, ſeated on the throne of Auguſtus, the legal ſucceſſors of the Roman Cæſars.

The Eaſtern or Conſtantinopolitan Empire ſtill ſubſiſted, the feeble remnant of that majeſty, which once had ſwayed the ſceptre of the world. But the riſing power of the Ottoman arms, under the auſpices of the ſecond Mahomet, totally obſcured this only remaining ray of the declining ſplendor of the Roman ſyſtem. The ſetting glory of the Saracen and Arabian Caliphs entirely va-

niſhed before the Turkiſh Creſcent; and the blood-ſtained laurels of Gerghis and Kouli Khan, polluted by that deſtructive ferocity which marked the rapidity of their conqueſts, have long ſince faded and withered from their brows. To cloſe this long liſt of the vanity of human grandeur, the only remaining branch of the illuſtrious houſe of Tamerlane, is at this moment a precarious dependant on the capricious will of a few private Merchants.

The deſtruction of moſt of theſe immenſe powers originated from a quarter, whence it was not dreaded till it was felt; from the attacks of barbarous and uncivilized nations. The Roman indeed ſeems to have foreſeen the tempeſt which was to overwhelm him, and with all the precaution, which human prudence could ſuggeſt, to have guarded againſt it by the ſtrong barriers and veteran legions which garriſon'd the towns on the banks of the Danube and the Rhine. The event proved the wiſdom of that foreſight which dictated the meaſure; for the moment the deſtructive policy of Conſtantine removed theſe barriers, the Barbarians ruſhed in at the opening, and entirely deſtroyed the tottering fabric.

Perhaps

Perhaps in future ages, by analogy of reaſoning, ſome Savage Tribes, now roaming over the vaſt deſarts of Aſia or America, may enrich themſelves with the fertile poſſeſſions of their more poliſhed neighbours; and like ſecond Goths, raiſe the rude ſtructure of Ignorance and Barbariſm on the ruins of Philoſophy, Science, and Civilization.—When the wounds of national diſſention are healed, and that liberty, for which it has ſtruggled, againſt the authority of the Parent Country, is eſtabliſhed on the firm baſis of acknowledged conſtitutional rights, the * Phænomenon of an independent Tranſatlantic ſtate may give the fatal blow to European Politics, and America perhaps ariſe the deſtined ſeat of a future Empire.

* To ſhew that ſpeculation is in ſome inſtances at leaſt well grounded, I ſhall lay before my readers a paſſage from Hume, which proves, that ſo long ago as the year 1606, the ſpeculatiſts of that age foretold, what a recent event has juſtified, "*Speculative reaſoners, during that age, raiſed many objections to planting remote colonies; and foretold, that after draining their mother country of its inhabitants, they would ſoon ſhake off her yoke, and erect* an independent government *in America.*" Vol 6, Page 127. By referring to the original text, the reader will find, that the Hiſtorian was no friend to this doctrine; but the event has juſtified the prediction.

When we compare Tacitus's treatiſe *on the Manners of the Germans*, with Lafitau's account of the *American Tribes*, we cannot but be ſtruck with the ſimilarity of the ſubject; and we may remark, that at the period when Tacitus wrote, when the Roman Empire was in its meridian glory, Germany, Gaul, and Britain, now the ſeats of Science and Literature, were nearly in the ſame ſtate of unpoliſhed nature, which is the preſent characteriſtic of the American Tribes, whom Lafitau deſcribes. Europe has now nearly arrived at the higheſt pitch of refinement and civilization. It has been obſerved, that the human mind will never remain inactive, but will always have either a progreſſive or retrograde motion; will either gain the heights of Excellence or ſink into the abyſs of Depravity; and there is a degree in both, beyond which it can neither riſe or fall, but like the flood, when it has gained the higheſt ſhore, will naturally retreat, and when at the loweſt ebb, will gradually recover its former height. The truth of this obſervation has been already too ſeverely exemplified to be doubted; may not a ſimilar corruption of manners produce a ſimilar decline in the arts and military proweſs? and is it an extravagant conjecture, that in proceſs of time the ſame fate may

overwhelm

overwhelm us, which deſtroyed the Empires before us?

But it is time to reſtrain the lawleſs efforts of Imagination, and to recal the attention of the mind from a ſpeculation, in whoſe windings and labyrinths our directing clue may be loſt; where the powers of deluſion may faſcinate the mental eye, and involve us in inextricable darkneſs and error.

If the reader will indulge me a few moments longer in the ſelf-created phantoms of my brain, I ſhall give way to the melancholy-pleaſing ideas of my fancy; and purſuing my ſpeculation, ſuppoſe what may be the probable ſtate of Great-Britain at that period, when we ſhall no longer exiſt as an independent nation; when the chains of Slavery ſhall have gall'd our limbs, and Liberty be only that "*magni nominis umbra*," that "*Shadow of a mighty name*," which

wrinkled Beldams
Teach to their grand children as ſomewhat rare,
That anciently appeared, but when, extends
Beyond their Chronicle.—GRAY'S AGRIPPINA.

Perhaps

Perhaps the inquiſitive Genius of Curioſity may then viſit this iſland, from the ſame motives which now attract the traveller to the venerable ruins of Athens or Rome: the Antiquary may collect a ſeries of Britiſh, with as much avidity, as he now arranges his Roman or Grecian coins; a true George the Third may engage the attention of Virtú as much as a genuine Auguſtus or Trajan; the older edition of Shakeſpeare, Milton, or Pope, may authorize a different reading, as much as an older manuſcript of Homer, Cicero, or Virgil; the monumental records of Weſtminſter-Abbey may be conſidered as the authentic teſtimonies of illuſtrious actions, as much as the inſcriptions collected by Montfaucon or the Arundelian Marbles at Oxford. The ruins of an Univerſity may attract the admiration of the traveller; the plans and deſigns of the different buildings may be preſerved with that reverence which we now pay to the ruins of Palmyra or Balbec. May not the ſame ſpirit which inſpired Cicero when he beheld the porticos of Athens, ſeize ſome future Philoſopher? the one has paid, the other will pay the homage of admiration due to departed Genius. As the one beheld with reverential awe thoſe ſeats which had been dignified by the preſence of a Socrates,

a

a Plato, and an Ariſtotle; the other may behold with pious gratitude thoſe, where the immortal Milton planned his Paradiſe Loſt; a Newton pierced through the clouds of philoſophical error; and the comprehenſive mind of a Bacon burſt the fetters of ſcholaſtic Pedantry, and boldly aſſerted the incontrovertible laws of Nature, Truth, and Learning. To contract myſelf to a narrower ſphere, may not reflection heave a ſigh, when ſhe beholds the veſtiges of this nurſery of Genius, where ſo many Patriots, Philoſophers, and Poets, each in their reſpective lines the boaſt of their native foil, firſt caught that generous enthuſiaſm for ſolid glory, which proved the ſource of ſuch renown to themſelves and their country; by which they reflected a mutual light on each other; and which enabled the one to immortalize by his pen, thoſe exploits which the more active abilities of the other had emboldened him to perform.

A.

I beg leave to lay before my readers the following Poem, produced by reflections of a ſimilar kind.

The

THE SLAVERY OF GREECE.

Unrival'd Greece! thou ever honour'd name,
Thou nurſe of heroes dear to deathleſs Fame!
Tho' now to worth, to honour all unknown,
Thy luſtre faded, and thy glories flown,
Yet ſtill ſhall Memory with reverted eye
Trace thy paſt worth, and view thee with a ſigh.
Thee freedom cheriſh'd once with foſtering hand,
And breath'd undaunted valour through the land,
Here the ſtern ſpirit of the Spartan ſoil,
The child of Poverty, inur'd to toil.
Here lov'd by Pallas and the ſacred Nine,
Once did fair Athens' tow'ry glories ſhine.
To bend the bow, or the bright faulchion wield,
To lift the bulwark of the brazen ſhield,
To toſs the terror of the whizzing ſpear,
The conqu'ring ſtandard's glitt'ring glories rear,
And join the madding battle's loud career,
How ſkill'd the Greeks; confeſs what Perſians ſlain
Were ſtrew'd on Marathon's enſanguin'd plain;
When heaps on heaps the routed ſquadrons fell,
And with their gaudy myriads peopled hell.
What millions bold Leonidas withſtood,
And ſeal'd the Grecian freedom with his blood;
Witneſs

Witneſs Thermopylæ! how fierce he trod,
How ſpoke a Hero, and how mov'd a God!
The ruſh of nations could alone ſuſtain,
While half the ravag'd globe was arm'd in vain.
Let Leuctra ſay, let Mantinea tell,
How great Epaminondas fought and fell!
Nor war's vaſt art alone adorn'd thy fame,
"But mild Philoſophy endear'd thy name."
Who knows not, ſees not with admiring eye,
How Plato thought, how Socrates could die?
To bend the arch, to bid the column riſe,
And the tall pile aſpiring pierce the ſkies.
The awful fane magnificently great,
With pictur'd pomp to grace, and ſculptur'd ſtate,
This ſcience taught; on Greece each ſcience ſhone,
Here the bold ſtatue ſtarted from the ſtone;
Here warm with life the ſwelling canvaſs glow'd;
Here big with thought the Poet's raptures flow'd:
Here Homer's lip was touch'd with ſacred fire,
And wanton Sappho tun'd her amorous lyre;
Here bold Tyrtæus rous'd the enervate throng,
Awak'd to glory by th' inſpiring ſong;
Here, Pindar ſoar'd a nobler, loftier way,
And brave Alcæus ſcorn'd a tyrant's ſway.
Here gorgeous Tragedy with great controul
Touch'd every feeling of the impaſſion'd ſoul;

While

While in ſoft meaſure tripping to the ſong
Her comic Siſter lightly danc'd along.—
This was thy ſtate! but oh! how chang'd thy fame,
And all thy glories fading into ſhame.
What? that thy bold, thy freedom-breathing land
Should crouch beneath a Tyrant's ſtern command!
That Servitude ſhould bind in galling chain,
Whom Aſia's millions once oppos'd in vain;
Who could have thought? who ſees without a groan,
Thy cities mouldering, and thy walls o'erthrown.
That where once tower'd the ſtately ſolemn fane,
Now moſs-grown ruins ſtrew the ravag'd plain,
And unobſerv'd but by the traveller's eye,
Proud, vaulted domes in fretted fragments lye,
And the fall'n column on the duſty ground,
Pale Ivy throws its ſluggiſh arms around.
Thy ſons (ſad change!) in abject bondage ſigh;
Unpitied toil, and unlamented die.
Groan at the labours of the galling oar,
Or the dark caverns of the mine explore.
The glitt'ring tyranny of Othman's ſons,
The pomp of horror which ſurrounds their thrones,

Has

Has awed their ſervile ſpirits into fear,
Spurn'd by the foot they tremble and revere.
The day of Labor, Nights ſad, ſleepleſs hour,
Th' inflictive ſcourge of arbitrary power,
The bloody terror of the pointed ſteel,
The murderous ſtake, the agonizing wheel,
And (dreadful choice) the bowſtring, or the bowl,
Damps their faint vigour, and unmans the ſoul.
Diſaſtrous Fate! ſtill tears will fill the eye,
Still recollection prompt the mournful ſigh;
When to the mind recurs thy former fame,
And all the horrors of thy preſent ſhame.
So ſome tall rock, whoſe bare, broad boſom high,
Tow'rs from the earth, and braves the inclement
ſky;
On whoſe vaſt top the blackening deluge pours,
At whoſe wide baſe the thundering Ocean roars;
In conſcious pride its huge gigantic form
Surveys imperious and defies the ſtorm.
Till worn by age, and mouldering to decay,
Th' inſidious waters waſh its baſe away,
It falls, and falling cleaves the trembling ground,
And ſpreads a tempeſt of deſtruction round.

B.

THE MICROCOSM.

No. VI.—MONDAY, *December* 11, 1787.

Turba Clientum.

A croud of Correſpondents.

WHATEVER ſatisfaction the reader may receive from the peruſal of the following letters, he is to attribute it to the favors of my unknown correſpondents; with whom I have taken the liberty allowed me of omitting ſome paſſages, which could not be inſerted, without incurring, on my ſide, the imputation of vanity. As I have been forced to adapt their productions to the limits of my work, a few paragraphs, which had not an immediate reference to the ſubject, have been alſo ſuppreſſed, but not a line added.

"To

"TO MR. GREGORY GRIFFIN.

" *Nunc adhibe puro*
" *Pectore verba, puer, nunc te melioribus offer.*—HOR.
" ——— ——— ——— *Now pliantly imure*
" *The mind to virtue, while your heart is pure;*
" *Now ſuck in wiſdom.* ——— FRANCIS.

"SIR,

"FULLY ſenſible that the nobleſt "purſuit which can poſſibly engage the attention "of a human being, next to the practice of Virtue "itſelf, is the ſtudy of diminiſhing the numberleſs "mad votaries, who daily flock to the alluring ban- "ners of vice; and by pointing out the latent quick- "ſands where ſo many heedleſs thouſands have "periſhed, exhort others to avoid a ſimilar de- "ſtruction, by a ſudden reform of their pernicious "courſes, and by eagerly embracing the proffered "offers of repentance; a mind eager to add its "humble mite to this glorious undertaking, dic- "tates the preſent epiſtle; and hopes, that the ſin- "cerity of its intention will plead for the favor "and patronage of the *Microcoſmopolitan*.

"Sages verſed in the moſt abſtruſe ſciences of "Philoſophy, thoſe who thro' all ages have "made

" made the moſt ſplendid apppearance in the paths
" of literature, and the eſtimation of the learned
" world, have in many inſtances generouſly given
" up the labours of their life, to the taſk of im-
" planting the admonitions of morality in the
" breaſt of their contemporaries.

" In the vegetable and animal creation, early cul-
" ture applied to the tender plant, or management to
" the beaſt, as ſoon as either is capable of receiving
" good or bad impreſſions, will remain, "until the
" one is hewn down and caſt into the fire," and the
" other periſhes by the natural effects of age. The
" Gardener's hand can cauſe the delicate Honey-
" ſuckle to entwine the Majeſtic Oak; the inha-
" bitant of Iſpahan tames the gigantic Elephant;
" the ſavage African traverſes his native deſarts on
" the back of the ſtately Dromedary; and the
" fartheſt Citizen of Kamſchatka paſſes over tracts
" of ice and ſnow ſeemingly impervious, by the
" wonderful ſagacity which he has inſtilled into
" Dogs. That the human mind is much more
" wonderfully formed for a ſimilar cultiva' on,
" need not be obſerved.

" Youth

"Youth is the ſeaſon, when every example, "every leſſon which virtue or vice can inculcate are "the moſt certain to ſtamp laſting impreſſions on "the mind. Paſſions imbibed at an early period, "ſeldom fail to give a deciſive bias to our future "life; and conquering almoſt every oppoſition, to "govern the man with an arbitrary ſway. Con- "vinced of this, how ſincerely grateful ſhould we "be for every endeavour which tends to the im- "portant point of our future felicity; how cau- "tiouſly ſhould we guard every trifling action "againſt the baleful influence of vice, or the in- "ſidious blandiſhments of temptation.

"Few breaſts are ſo pure, or poſſeſs ſuch an "abſolute ſelf-dominion, but that ſome one paſ- "ſion will by degrees, and by frequent indul- "gence, gain an aſcendency over the others; and "work them into a ſtate of ſuch abject ſlavery, as "to render them entirely ſubſervient to its own "authority. Would we but impartially examine "our own minds, and determine to diſcover it in "its riſe, very little reſtraint might perhaps ut- "terly eradicate it in its infancy; or reduce it at "leaſt to ſuch ſubjection, as to prevent it from "becoming our future bane.

"But

" But deſcending from ſubjects more important, " give me leave to remark, with how much greater " pleaſure to themſelves, with how much leſs cen- " ſure from the world at large, or particularly from " their more immediate acquaintance, would the " lives of individuals be paſſed, if each (although " I fancy it is a thing utterly impracticable en- " tirely to attain) would endeavour, as far as is in " his power, to extirpate from his converſation, " and the general tenor of his more private actions, " certain ridiculous peculiarities which eminently " mark his character.

" If, for inſtance, I interrogate a friend of mine " whether Miſs ——— attended ſuch a ball, and " how ſhe danced? he inſtantly replies, " *Indeed, " Sir, ſhe did attend; and danced, oh! ſhe danced like " the very Devil!*" How, I again aſk, was ſhe dreſſed? " *Oh! ſhe was dreſſed with peculiar elegance, out- " ſhone the other beauties in the room, and looked as " enchanting as the Devil.*" Whether his infernal " majeſty really poſſeſſes all the attributes my " friend is pleaſed to aſcribe to him or not, " is not much to our purpoſe; however, to the ge- " nerality of his auditors I ſhould rather ſuppoſe, " that ſuch an addition to moſt of the ſentences he

" uttered,

" uttered, would appear in a disadvantageous, ra-
" ther than an ornamental light.

" The same person (as if he was desirous early to
" accustom his body to the use of a coffin) would, I
" believe, rather forego his night's rest, than sleep
" in a bed two inches broader than is absolutely
" necessary. Many other peculiarities time will
" not permit me to notice. I frequently threaten
" him with the certainty of his expiring an old
" batchelor; but I am convinced, that an hint
" from Mr. Griffin, will be far more efficacious
" towards the recovery of my friend, than the
" terrors of perpetual celibacy.

" I am, Sir, &c.

" Nov. 18, 1786. "MUSIDORUS."

" DEAR GREG,

" YOU were in a plaguy hurry to
" fill up the vacant seat in the lounging club. I
" should have disputed the pretensions of Narcissus
" myself, and I am confident there is not a single
" member of our *non-chalance* society, but better
" deserved the distinction;—Hear, and judge

" for

" for yourſelf.—You muſt know we are a firm
" CON, who regularly ſpend our Saturdays in re-
" capitulating the buſineſs of the week, and the
" lucky rogue who proves himſelf to have done
" the *leaſt* good, who has taken the moſt effectual
" pains to evade every purpoſe of his education, to
" affect indiſpoſition with the greateſt art, and loll
" away his hours with the moſt perfect indolence,
" is choſen PRESIDENT for the enſuing week;
" with many privileges that I may poſſibly ac-
" quaint you with hereafter.—The immediate
" peals of applauſe that follow the promotion,
" would do your heart good, and has made me take
" more pains to arrive at the honor, than the cloſeſt
" attention to my education would have coſt
" me. I proved to the ſatisfaction of the whole
" ſociety laſt Saturday, that all the traces of my
" abilities, diſcoverable for the laſt week, were
" thoſe before them on the chimney piece, from a
" hot poker. What ſhouts of applauſe! and I was
" actually huſtled one foot into the chair, when
" an unlucky member diſcovered, that I had taken
" too much pains in burning the initial letters of
" my name, and that they remained an *indelible*
" proof againſt me. He ſprung into the chair
" with the unanimous voice of the whole club, for

" it

" it was proved in his favor, that in the whole
" courſe of the week he had done nothing, except
" indeed throwing a cravat into the fire, becauſe it
" had been ill waſhed, and was not brought the mo-
" ment he ordered it. There was exertion in this,
" added to ſome abuſe he had given the ſervant,
" and I voted to diſpoſſeſs him; but it appeared,
" that his Tutor, with a mildneſs peculiar to him-
" ſelf, had taken great pains that very morning to
" convince him of his errors; that his idleneſs and
" extravagance deeply diſtreſs'd an indulgent fa-
" ther; was ruin to the hopes of his whole family;
" and a melancholy waſte of abilities that he might
" ſome time lament, but never have the power to
" retrieve. To this, and much more, dictated by
" virtue and friendſhip, he turned an ear of *non-*
" *chalance*, vow'd it was an exceſſive *bore*, flew to
" the club, and ſent for a new pair of buckles
" three inches larger than the laſt. I roared my
" conſent to the promotion of ſuch a jolly dog,
" proof againſt the mildeſt dictates of reaſon; the
" ſtrongeſt ties of gratitude and affection; and the
" neceſſity of that œconomy, which his ſituation
" in life particularly demanded from him. I now
" ſtand a candidate for the next week, and in the
" name of all the powers of indolence, my dear

" Greg, don't bring lounging into contempt, till " I have ſhared the honours of the ſociety.

" You have abſolutely deſtroyed us by your rail- " lery againſt Swearing. It was a happy relief for " dullneſs, and ſupplied the want of information " upon every ſubject. I ſwore roundly on the cle- " verneſs of your firſt number, and had actually " practiſed a new and choice collection of execra- " tions to come out with the ſecond; and when " our PRESIDENT read it, (a labour by the by, " that but for his unrivaled claims would have coſt " him his place) I ſat lounging with one leg care- " leſsly thrown over my knee, patting the other, " with my new volley, as I may ſay, ready at my " fingers ends; but when he had finiſhed, I could " not expreſs a ſingle ſyllable, and have not ſwore " an oath ſince, without a ſheepiſh kind of con- " ſciouſneſs, that deſtroys as it were the plump- " neſs of utterance; and I verily believe, I ſhall " be reduced to the wretched alternative of feign- " ing myſelf totally dumb, or be at the pains of " acquiring ſome knowledge, to qualify myſelf for " converſation.

"I was recovering the other day, and beginning "to rap out an execration with a tolerable air of "indifference, when a tall fellow tapped me on "the ſhoulder, halloo'd *Microcoſm* in my ear, and "making me ſpring at leaſt three feet from the "ground, whirl'd my abortive oath to ſome at- "tendant Spirit, who never let it drop in this "world, and I hope will never record it in the "next. But, for pity's ſake, my dear Greg, don't "be too virtuous; leave us ſome vices to revel in; "for at the unmerciful rate you go on, lopping off "a vice or a folly every week, we ſhall be the "dulleſt ſeminary in Chriſtendom; we ſhall have "nothing to do but ſtudy; and I am ſadly afraid "it will become faſhionable to be attentive, dili- "gent, and healthy;—for why attempt, by "feigned ſickneſs, to eſcape from ſcholaſtic tram- "mels, if it is no longer *knowing* to *ſwear, lounge,* "or in any ſhape to play the fool?

"Your's,

Nov. 20, 1786.

"OCTAVIUS."

"*Eton, Monday, Nov.* 27, 1786.

"To the MICROCOSMOPOLITAN.

"DEAR GRIF,

"BEING myſelf a ſincere "admirer of your plan, and being willing, as far "as lay in my power to contribute to its ſucceſs, "I have made it my buſineſs to collect the vari- "ous obſervations of your fellow-citizens on their "new Cenſor. I ſhall not detain you with the "many different conjectures concerning the mean- "ing, and true pronunciation of your title, ſuf- "fice it, there was not a word beginning with "the ſame letter, or any ways reſembling it, ei- "ther in ſimilarity of ſound, or an equal number "of ſyllables, to which it was not ſuppoſed to "have ſome reference. Nor was the deſign itſelf, "and the concealment which the author affected, "leſs the ſubject of inveſtigation. Morality, ri- "baldry, politics, poetry, panegyric, and per- "ſonal invective, were by turns hinted at as the "materials of your lucubrations. With regard "to yourſelf, were I to mention to you all who "were ſuppoſed to lie hid under the name of "*Gregory Griffin*, I ſhould ſeem to impoſe on your "credulity. Neither the vacant levity of the "*idler*, the ſolid ſtupidity of the *blockhead*, nor "the

" the harmleſs inſignificance which diſtinguiſhes
" the lifeleſs character of the *cypher*, ſecured
" them from the imputation of GREGORI-
" ANISM. Every body's motions were watched
" with a ridiculous attention; the hapleſs being
" who was diſcovered reading a manuſcript of
" any kind, gave riſe to an immediate ſuſpicion;
" and an unuſual diſtention of the riſible muſcles
" at the ſight of the Microcoſm, effectually
" branded him with the name of *Authorling*. Nay,
" even the innocent letters which compoſed the
" name, (upon the idea of *Cabal and Smectymnuus*)
" were adjudged to the rack; and like tortured
" criminals, made to confeſs more than they knew.
" Nor were there wanting ſome, who by ſhrewd
" ſhrugs and ſly innuendos, ſagaciouſly intimated,
" that tho' they ſaid nothing, *they knew what they*
" *knew*. The beak and claws of the imaginary be-
" ing, whoſe name the author had aſſumed, were
" not ſuppoſed to be given him for nothing. And
" many, the ſummit of whoſe ambition before
" had been to paſs thro' life with comfortable ſe-
" renity, now began to look upon themſelves as
" objects ſufficiently dignified for ſatirical notice,
" or hoped at leaſt, to be laſhed into importance
" as the ſhadows of more diſtinguiſhed offenders,

"without perſonally feeling the ſmart; as the "*pillorying* of his maſter reflects honour on the "printer's devil, while he himſelf remains

——"*Sanus utriſque*
"*Auribus.*
"*His ears uncropped.*

"I am, Sir,
"Your ſincere well wiſher,
"OBSERVATOR."

NOTES to CORRESPONDENTS.

It is not conſiſtent with my plan to inſert the letter of TELEMACHUS; as to its publication in the London Papers, he is at liberty to uſe his pleaſure.--I had unfortunately miſlayed the letter of ABSALOM THOUGHTFUL, which prevented my inſerting it as I intended. Whenever the hints he furniſhed me with ſhall appear, he may depend upon due acknowledgement.--My Female Correſpondent, who ſigns herſelf DOROTHY TEAR-SHEET, as I am willing to believe her all that is fair and modeſt, *was not*, I ſhould ſuppoſe, aware of the tendency of her ſignature.--CÆMETERIUS ſhall be attended to.

And now, having thus far proſecuted my undertaking, with a ſpirit of induſtry, inſpired by an encouragement and applauſe far above my deſerts, or my expectations, I muſt, for

for awhile, retire from the obſervation of the public. To my fellow-citizens I need make no apology for the temporary diſcontinuance of my labours; as the ſame event which cauſes that ceſſation, diſperſes them into different and diſtant parts of the kingdom, whither the works of the *Microcoſmopolitan* could not be conveyed to them without a trouble and expence of which they are unworthy. Thoſe of my readers who do not come under that denomination, will not, I hope, be offended at the pauſe I am thus neceſſitated to make, but will receive, with equal kindneſs and indulgence, my weekly lucubrations, from MONDAY, the 15th of *January* next, on which day they will be re-commenced, to be continued without further interruption.

P. S. During this interval, any letter (poſt paid) will reach the Author with the uſual direction.

THE MICROCOSM.

No. VII.—MONDAY, *January* 15, 1787.

——————————*Jocis,*
Ludoque dictus non Sat idoneus.—HORACE.

——————————*Unfit*
For Sprightly Jokes, or ſportive Wit.

'TO GREGORY GRIFFIN, ESQ.

'SIR,

'TO diſcharge with faithfulneſs the duties 'of the important office which you have 'undertaken, you ought in my opinion 'to omit nothing which might be any ways con-'ducive to the advantage or improvement of your 'fellow-citizens; to the advancement of their wel-'fare, or the ſupport of their dignity. Of this 'number

'number I have the honor to be one; and by 'grounding a few remarks on the ſubject which I 'now offer to your conſideration, you will confer 'a benefit not on me only, but on many others of 'the great as well as little world, who may labour 'under the ſame calamity.

'You muſt know, Mr. Griffin, that it is my 'hard hap to receive an annual invitation from an 'old gentleman, a diſtant relation of mine, to 'ſpend every Chriſtmas at his Hall, in a North-'ern County. This compliment I am never at 'liberty to refuſe; as his eſtate being very large, 'and himſelf too far advanced in life to give any 'apprehenſions of matrimony, my family have 'built great hopes and expectations on his par-'tiality for me. That you may underſtand the 'nature of my misfortunes, it is neceſſary to in-'form you, that he is one of that race of men, 'called Country 'Squires; who having been de-'prived of the advantages of a liberal education, by 'the fooliſh fondneſs of his parents, which occa-'ſioned them always to keep him in their ſight, 'profeſſes to hold *book-learning* in the greateſt con-'tempt. Hence he takes no ſmall pleaſure to 'overthrow the arguments advanced by the parſon

'of the Pariſh in its favor, by alledging its ineffi-
'cacy to enrich a man, which he exemplifies
'in the poverty of his opponent; and adds with a
'triumphant ſneer, that "*if his learning would*
"*get him a good living, he would ſay ſomething.*" In
'ſhort, Sir, this talent of *Joking*, is the grievance
'of which I complain; for when the old gentleman
'is once in the humour, he is apt to be unmerci-
'fully waggiſh; an event which never fails to take
'place on the day of my arrival.

'I would you could ſee us, Mr. Griffin, as we
'ſit round the table in the great hall; you might
'then poſſibly form ſome idea of my miſerable
'ſituation.—It is neceſſary for your proper in-
'formation, to premiſe, that the company on that
'day always conſiſts of the 'Squire, with his feet
'in flannel, (the gout, like myſelf, uſually paying
'its annual viſit about this time;)—the parſon of
'the pariſh, who is always invited to welcome
'me,—and two nieces of the 'Squire, who have
'paſſed ſome years with him, not much to the ad-
'vantage of their education, and are dizened out
'on this occaſion in all their finery.

'Having for ſeveral years been accuſtomed to ſuſ-
'tain a very regular fire of wit all the firſt evening
'of

'of my arrival, and knowing from experience the 'order in which the jokes ſucceed each other, I 'can now nearly bear the battle without flinching. 'The firſt attack is made, as the parſon terms it, '*à poſteriori*, by deſiring a cuſhion to be brought 'for me to ſit down upon; one of his nieces, with 'a ſuitable grin on her countenance, enquires the 'reaſon, as in duty bound, for which ſhe is re-'ferred to me; and on my proteſting my igno-'rance of it, the old gentleman's right eye in-'ſtantly aſſumes an arch leer at the company, while 'with a compoſed gravity he enquires of me, "*Whether birch grows pretty plentifully about Eton?*" 'This queſtion is immediately followed by an un-'governable he! he! from the young ladies, and 'a ſly "*I warrant ye!*" from the parſon. The 'Squire having for a time retained his gravity, at 'length, as if quite overcome by the force of his 'own wit, gives himſelf up to a loud and tu-'multuous vociferation. This grand volley of 'wit, with the ſcattered ſmall ſhot that follow, 'concerning, *Great home conſumption of the Article*; '*Great demand for pickle, diachylon*, &c. &c. ge-'nerally fills up the ſpace before dinner. That 'joke indeed about the ſimilitude of *our* arms to 'the American, namely *thirteen ſtripes*, did, the

'firſt

'first time of hearing, occafion me to laugh heartily; the fecond recital provoked a fmile; but I 'am now grown fo callous by dint of frequent repetition, that I can hear it without moving a 'mufcle of my countenance.

'At dinner my troubles begin afrefh. The 'very difhes are calculated to furnifh out a fet of 'witticifms. The leg of mutton he fuppofes he 'may help me to, as he dares to fay that I never 'heard of any fuch thing at Eton; the boiled 'fowls he conjectures to be too common food for 'me; and he declares himfelf not without appre-'henfions, that I may find fault with the poornefs 'of his wines, being accuftomed to drink none but 'the choiceft elfewhere. During the interval be-'tween the firft and fecond courfe, it is eafy to 'perceive that there has been fome little plan con-'certed for my furprife or mortification. Every 'nofe in company has a forefinger applied to it to 'enforce fecrecy; and every eye is fixed on my 'countenance, to enjoy the tranfports, which I 'am expected to difcover at the entrance of a '*plumb pudding* of immoderate fize; half of which 'is immediately transferred to my plate, accom-'panied with fundry wife cautions, to lofe no 'time

'time and not to be too modeſt. While in my 'own defence, I am endeavouring to make away 'with ſome little portion of it, the 'Squire de- 'clares he thought he ſhould ſurpriſe me; and on 'my diſclaiming any ſuch ſurpriſe, an appeal is 'made to the reſt of the company, by whom it is 'unanimouſly reſolved, that, when the pudding 'made its appearance, I betrayed the ſtrongeſt 'ſymptoms of rapturous admiration.

'Finding it in vain to contend, I now reſign my 'ſelf to my fate;—nor long the time, before the 'old gentleman's countenance begins to undergo 'various revolutions, which ſeem to prognoſticate 'ſome ſtroke of uncommon pleaſantry:—and at the 'appearance of a diſh of pippins, I prepare myſelf 'with Chriſtian patience for the *good ſtory*, which 'I am aſſured I have never heard before,—name- 'ly, "*a full and true account of his being caught in* "*Farmer Dobſon's Orchard, ſtealing, as it might be,* "*juſt ſuch apples as theſe, when he was juſt about my* "*age.*"—It is now, Mr. Griffin, juſt fourteen years 'ſince I firſt heard this ſtory; and every one of 'the fourteen times of telling it, he has, with won- 'derful facility, adapted it to my comprehenſion, 'by contriving to be "*juſt about my age*" when

'the

'the adventure happened. The tale being told, 'it is cuſtomary for one of his nieces to aſk me in 'a whiſper, "if I don't think him *monſtrous funny?*" 'on my aſſenting to it, I am informed, that "*he* "*has ſome ſuch comical ſtories I can't think*, and 'that "ſhe will get him to tell me *how old Dixon* "*tricked the Londoner.*" Nor is it without an in-'finite number of proteſtations, that I am able to 'make her ſenſible of my perfect acquaintance 'with all the circumſtances of that notable hiſtory, 'and to diſſuade her from a courteſy ſo ſuper-'fluous.

'After ſome ſhort reſpite, I perceive the old 'gentleman begins to grow waggiſh again, and am 'ſoon deſired to ſtand up and meaſure heights 'with the young ladies.—As I am ſome years older 'than they, I have been regularly found ſome 'inches taller every time of meaſurement; and 'this circumſtance has, as regularly produced one 'wink of the 'Squire's right eye, and two ſeveral 'repetitions of the old proverb, that "*Ill weeds* "*grow apace.*"

'Next follows my examination by the parſon, 'touching the proficiency which I have made; 'prefaced

'prefaced indeed by the 'Squire's declaring himſelf 'willing to wager any thing on *my knowing all 'about it as well as the beſt of them.* During the 'ceremony he uſually falls aſleep, and on 'waking takes the opportunity to have a fling at 'the parſon, by aſking ſignificantly "whether I "am too *hard for him?*

'But in ſhort, Mr. Griffin, I lament my inabi-'lity to give you a perfect idea of this character, 'which however I am perſuaded is not very un-'common. There are, no doubt, many, who in 'the ſame manner, aim at the reputation of *Wits,* 'without any advantages either of natural abi-'lities, or acquired underſtanding On ſuch as 'theſe I could wiſh you to beſtow ſome advice, 'for the correction of their ignorant pretenſions, 'and the amendment of their erroneous opinions. 'Theſe are the people moſt apt to indulge their 'ſatirical humour at the expence of your fellow-'citizens, whoſe honour and credit it is your du-'ty to defend againſt every calumniatory impu-'tation. Tell then theſe good people, how wide-'ly miſtaken they are in ſuppoſing, that the mind 'of youth, like the vegetation of the wallnut-tree, 'is quickened by blows in its advances to matu-

'rity.

'rity. Tell them, that the waters of Helicon do 'not flow with *brine*; nor are the laurel and the 'birch ſo intimately interwoven in the chaplets of 'the Muſes, as they are willing to believe. Tell 'them alſo, that an increaſe of *knowledge* does not 'neceſſarily bring with it a proportionable increaſe 'of *appetite*; and that the being able to read a 'Roman Author with facility, does not juſtify 'the ſuppoſition of an immoderate deſire for '*toaſt and butter*, and an inſatiable craving for '*plumb-pudding*. Remind them, that theſe, and all 'ſimilar Jokes which they are pleaſed to make uſe 'of on theſe occaſions, have been made the ſame 'uſe of at leaſt fifty times before. Adviſe them to 'reflect how often they themſelves, on the ſame 'ſubjects, at ſtated opportunities, have reiterated 'thoſe regular bon mots and trite conceits; how 'often given vent to the ſame ſtrain of annual wag-'gery, to the ſame ſallies of periodical facetiouſ-'neſs. And let them know, that as they have but 'little to boaſt of on the ſcore of novelty, they have 'as little on that of humour. If on the re-'petition of their witticiſms, a grin takes poſſeſ-'ſion, of the countenance of their auditors, warn 'them that they miſtake not the ſneer of ridicule 'for the ſmile of approbation; and hint to them,

'that

'that tho', by the reſpect or diffidence of thoſe 'at whoſe expence it pleaſes them to be merry, 'they may be ſecured from being rendered open-'ly ridiculous; they may ſtill be liable and likely 'to become ſecretly contemptible.

'I am, Sir,

'Your's, &c. &c.

The grievance of which my correſpondent complains, is well worthy of being attended to, nor had it indeed eſcaped my notice; but he has placed his ſubject in ſo proper a light, that to dilate on it farther would be totally ſuperfluous.—I ſhall therefore only venture to throw together ſome obſervations of a more general kind.

It is with men of their wit, as with women of their beauty:—Tell a woman ſhe is fair, and ſhe will not be offended that you tell her ſhe is cruel. Tell a man that he is a wit, and if you lay to his charge ill-nature or blaſphemy, he will take it as a compliment rather than a reproach. Thus too, there is no woman but lays ſome claim to beauty; and no man that will give up his pretenſions to wit. In caſes of this kind therefore, where ſo much depends upon opinion, and where every man

man thinks himſelf qualified to be his own judge, there is nothing to a reader ſo uſeleſs as illuſtration; and nothing to an author ſo dangerous as definition. Any attempt therefore to decide what true WIT is, muſt be ineffectual; as not one in a hundred would be content to abide by the deciſion: it is impoſſible to rank all mankind under the name of wits, and there is ſcarce one in a hundred who does not think that he merits the appellation.

Hence it is that every one, how little qualified ſoever, is fond of making a diſplay of his fancied abilities; and generally at the expence of ſome one to whom he ſuppoſes himſelf infinitely ſuperior. And from this ſuppoſition many miſtakes ariſe to thoſe who commence wags, with a very ſmall ſhare of wit, and a ſtill ſmaller of judgment; whoſe imaginations are by nature unprolific, and whoſe minds are uncultivated by education. Theſe perſons, while they are ringing their rounds on a few dull jeſts, are apt to miſtake the rude and noiſy merriment of illiterate jocularity, for genuine humour. They often unhappily conceive, that thoſe laugh *with* them, who laugh *at* them. The ſarcaſms which every one diſdains to anſwer, they vainly

vainly flatter themſelves are unanſwerable; forgetting, no doubt, that their *good things* are unworthy the notice of a Retort, and below the condeſcenſion of Criticiſm. They know not perhaps that the Aſs, whom the fable repreſents as aſſuming the playfulneſs of the lap-dog, is a perfect picture of jocular ſtupidity; and that in like manner, that awkward abſurdity of waggiſhneſs, which they expect ſhould delight, cannot but diſguſt; and inſtead of laying claim to admiration, muſt inſure contempt.

But, alas! I am aware that mine will prove a ſucceſsleſs undertaking; and that, tho' knight-errand like I ſally forth to engage with the Monſters of Witticiſm and Waggery, all my proweſs will be inadequate to the atchievement of the enterprize. The world will continue as facetious as ever in ſpite of all I can do; and people will be juſt as fond of their "little jokes and old ſtories," as if I had never combatted their inclination.

Since then I cannot utterly extirpate this unchriſtian practice, my next endeavour muſt be, to direct it properly, and improve it by ſome wholeſome regulations.—And herein ſhall I imitate his moſt

moſt Chriſtian Majeſty, who by licenſing a limited number of brothel houſes, reſtricted an evil which he never could entirely have ſuppreſſed; prevented many of the ill conſequences which naturally ariſe from promiſcuous libertiniſm; and drew moreover from the profits no very inconſiderable revenue; thus, from the folly of individuals deriving advantage to the community. Equally advantageous to the public, and equally profitable to myſelf, will be the plan which I have laid down; and which I have already beſtowed ſome pains to bring to perfection. I propoſe, if I meet with proper encouragement, making application to parliament for permiſſion to open "A LICENCED WAREHOUSE FOR WIT," and for a Patent, entitling me to the ſole vending and uttering Wares of this kind, for a certain term of years. For this purpoſe, I have already laid in *Jokes*, *Jeſts*, *Witticiſms*, *Morceaus*, and *Bon-Mots* of every kind, to a very conſiderable amount, well worthy the attention of the public. I have *Epigrams*, that want nothing but the ſting; *Conundrums*, that need nothing but an explanation; *Rebuſſes* and *Acroſtics*, that will be complete with the addition of the name only. Theſe being in great requeſt, may be had at an hour's warning. *Impromptu's* will be got ready

ready at a week's notice. For common and vernacular uſe, I have a long liſt of the moſt palpable *Puns* in the language, digeſted in Alphabetical order;—for theſe I expect good ſale at both the univerſities.—*Jokes* of all kinds ready *cut* and *dry*. N. B. Proper allowance made to gentlemen of the law going on circuit; and to all ſecond-hand venders of wit and retailers of repartee, who take large quantities. N. B. *Attic Salt* in any quantity.—N. B. Moſt money given for old *Jokes*.

B.

THE

THE MICROCOSM.

No. VIII.—MONDAY, *January* 22, 1787.

Majorum primus quiſquis fuit ille tuorum
Aut paſtor fuit, aut illud quod dicere nolo.

JUVENAL.

——— *Your honour's ancient ſource*
Was a poor ſhepherd's boy, or ſomething worſe.

DRYDEN.

TURNING over the other day ſome manuſcripts belonging to the Griffin family, I accidentally caſt my eyes on a parchment roll, carefully ſealed, and inſcribed "The Pedigree." Not having before conſidered that I was entitled to any anceſtry, I began to feel an increaſed conſequence, as I opened this ſacred teſtimony of my being a ſon of Adam; and was elated or depreſſed, according to the titles or occupations of my grand-fathers from time immemorial.

I will not, courteous reader, detain thee with the honorable mention made of my family by bards of old; how, for inſtance, one of them being inſpector of the gardens to a foreign potentate, was overdoſed by one Hercules, who in the mean while robbed an orchard of certain golden-pippins: —how, afterwards, upon my anceſtor's waking, he claimed them by right of diſcovery, and in farther proof of ſuch right, moſt valiantly did beat his brains about his ears. How, another being appointed guardian of a woollen manufactory, was lulled to ſleep by a certain adventurer from acroſs the ſeas, who by that means ſtole his golden fleece; (no impeachment on the ſagacity or vigilance of my anceſtor,) the ſame ſpark having previouſly impoſed on a wild and fiery bull who kept a mighty coil, and by putting a yoke on his neck ſubjected him to his own convenience. Theſe, reader, I ſay, I will not detain thee with; but as I propoſe to make my after reflections on this parchment, the ſubject of this paper, ſhall proceed to them without farther preamble.

Pride, ſays the old Caſtilian, is that principle, which from a conſciouſneſs of inborn ſuperiority, ſets a man above the weakneſſes of human nature;

in

in prosperity enables him to preserve that dignity which his situation demands; and prevents him in adversity from consenting to any thing which might be derogatory to the principles of a man of honor. These, probably, or nearly these, are the ideas not of a patriotic but provincial bigot; but this is far from being a true definition of pride: and not only theoretical supposition, but practical observation, will daily enable us in some measure to controvert this reasoning. In order to reduce our enquiry as near the truth as possible, let us, by placing the arguments of opposite prejudice in equal balances, suppose, as is generally the case, that a fair and candid decision will lay in the mid-way between them.

Pride, says the more polished, and of consequence less prejudiced man of the world, who has not had the honour to have been born on the other side of the Pyrenees, is a false principle of honor, seeking its gratification in the abject submission of others, and refining to extravagant punctilio and constrained resentment, that, which should only proceed from the genuine and lively emotions of the soul. It is a deformity of the mind, which subjects its possessor not only to the ridicule

ridicule of all around him, but to infinite mortification on the failure of that reſpect which he conſiders as due to his ſuperior merit; a mortification, which as few others view him in the ſame light, he muſt be frequently ſubjected to.

Though theſe principles are in all reſpects diametrically oppoſite, each of them have a ſpecious appearance of truth. By temperiſig therefore each with the other, are we moſt likely to prove, whether pride is a principle to be cheriſhed in the human heart or no. That pride, for inſtance, which when moderately indulged, fires a man with a juſt and noble reſentment for wrongs received, when carried farther, degenerates into punctilio. That which prevents a man from condeſcending to any thing unworthy himſelf, is a laudable principle; but when any thing a degree below his expectation or wiſhes is interpreted into an unworthy occupation, it becomes a folly. As to the mortifications a man draws on himſelf, by an intemperate indulgence of this failing, it muſt be allowed, that the poiſon is in that reſpect its own antidote; and a mind ſo impregnated, is at leaſt equal to ſupporting the ridicule which is levelled againſt it. Pride in ſhort is of two kinds, defenſive and of-

fenſive. While only defenſive, it is far from being *offenſive*, and ſerves as a ſword in the ſcabbard, which though harmleſs at the moment, protects the wearer from inſult; when offenſive, it is an attack on the reſt of mankind, which calls for every one's exertions to repel it.

But I ſeem to be ſtraying from my motto, which, as I am more particularly on the ſubject of family pride, calls on me to prove the deſcent of all our noble houſes from ſhepherds, or what, as the poet ſings, "I am aſhamed to ſay." As in a former paper I invited my readers to a melancholy proſpect in the terra incognita of probabilities; ſo will I now preſent them with a full as unflattering a retroſpect in the terra firma of Hiſtory.

Mankind are obliged to the ſo much talked of Golden age, in no other reſpect than for the quantity of harmonious ditties it has produced; and the pretty alluſions concerning hanging woods, purling ſtreams, the ſocial intercourſe of man and ſheep, the great conveniency which ſwains of thoſe days uſed to experience in their extraordinary powers of abſtinence, &c. &c. which it has from

from time immemorial, and ſtill continues to furniſh to Arcadian Garretteers. So far indeed was any age from being preexiſtent to the iron, that the firſt crime committed by man, was a violation of the expreſs law of God; the ſecond of that of God and nature. From that time forward, particular facts, which prove that Antediluvian is no word to be applied to any thing over religious, are too numerous to dwell on. Suffice it to ſay, that the hiſtory of our right worſhipful grandſires, both before and ſince the flood, does not at all tend to ſtrengthen the opinion of the poet.

Ætas parentum pejor avis tulit
Nos nequiores, mox daturos
Progeniem vitioſiorem.—HOR.

More vicious than their father's age
Our ſires begot the preſent race
Of actions impious, bold, and baſe;
And yet with crimes to us unknown,
Our ſons ſhall make the coming age their own.

FRANCIS.

The conqueſt, wealth, luxury, and from thence the decline of commonwealths, have in all ages

been the theme as well of the Moraliſt as the Hiſtorian; theſe therefore let us paſs by, and by looking back ſo far only as to the firſt population of this Iſland, conſider, whether the motto is not as applicable to the family pride of a true born Briton, as that of a Roman Citizen.

Notwithſtanding the comfortable aſſertions of thoſe ingenious gentlemen who wiſh to derive us from the illuſtrious race of Troy, our vicinity to to the Continent pleads hard for our being neither more or leſs than the deſcendants of a few ſhipwrecked fiſhermen; or what is worſe, ſome light footed heroes, who preferred the chance of eſcaping by ſea, to the certainty of hanging on ſhore. Nor has this ſtock been much mended by the exotic ſhoots which have from time to time been ingrafted on it: Such as the Romans, our firſt invaders, from whom, I believe, many genealogiſts of the preſent day pretend to derive their origin; though it ſcarce ſeems probable, that a people who had more pride of birth than any other, would have conſented to forego their country and friends, in order to ſettle among a race of barbarians; unleſs perhaps ſome few who were

were not in the Cenſor's liſt, and therefore in fact no Romans, or ſome chance deſerters, who took refuge among the natives to avoid military diſcipline. The Danes, a wretched band of adventurers, whoſe ferocity was their only diſtinguiſhing characteriſtic; whoſe only motive for forſaking their own country was poverty, and whoſe only view in invading Britain was plunder: The Saxons, in themſelves a brave and antient nation, but happily at that time delivered of their own ruffians in the perſons of our conquerors: Laſt of all the Normans, under the command of a baſtard, put a finiſhing blow to the contentions of foreign powers for the poſſeſſion of this unhappy iſland; and compleated a mixture of bravoes, differing in their manners and intereſts, each (as not being attached to one head by any principles of loyalty and affection) naturally endeavouring to advance his own partizans; and ſmothering that jealouſy from conſtraint, which only waited for an opportunity to burſt into a flame.

From this engaging portrait of our forefathers, a Chineſe Philoſopher would be led to ſuppoſe, that the antiquity of a Britiſh family was its great-

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eſt ſtain. But ſo far is this from being the caſe, that even in this miniature picture of mankind, family pride is no inconſiderable feature; and ſome there are, who though their only merit lies in a crowded vault, from that ſingle diſtinction conſider themſelves as infinitely ſuperior to thoſe *men of Yeſterday*, whoſe meritorious exertions evince them to be rather ambitious of founding, than boaſting a noble family. But from a probable ſuppoſition that this extravagant principle can only have taken root in the minds of thoſe from whom it is impoſſible to eradicate it, let us proceed to that family pride, which has at firſt a more ſpecious appearance, and if ingrafted on notions naturally virtuous, is more likely to produce good effects; that, I mean, which boaſts not ſo much the antiquity as eminence of its family. Even this, however, though to a noble mind it is an additional incentive to great and glorious actions, if it happens to be cheriſhed by a wicked or even a paſſive diſpoſition, will be found to be equally ridiculous with the other.

If the good qualities of mankind were like thoſe of cattle, hereditary, a virtuous anceſtry would

would be the moſt deſirable poſſeſſion a man could receive from inheritance; but if experience teaches us that they ſo ſeldom are, if from the adulation with which men of family and fortune are generally from their infancy ſurrounded, it is very improbable that they ſhould be oftener virtuous, what does a man derive from a noble family; unleſs, that by the profuſion of light in the back ground, the ſhade in front is more effectually expoſed. To thoſe few therefore, to thoſe choſen few, who conſider that a noble family reflects either honor or diſgrace only according to the uſe made of it by themſelves; who reflect, that it is nothing more than a ſplendid burthen, an additional tax on them, to add one more to the diſtinguiſhed liſt, to them may a degree of family pride be conſidered as an advantage: And among thoſe, our little world may boaſt of having uſhered no inconſiderable ſhare into the larger theatre of life; who have ſince diſtinguiſhed themſelves as good and great men. Nor in any other reſpect does a public education ſo much evince its ſuperiority, as in the equitable treatment our citizens receive from each other; and which, ſays Dr. Moore, "often ſerves as an antidote againſt the

" childiſh ſophiſtical notions with which weak or
" deſigning men endeavour to inſpire them in af-
" ter life."

C.

NOTES to CORRESPONDENTS.

NO NOVELIST, Two SENEX's, and the COUNTRY GIRL are received. The latter has a full right to the *indulgence* ſhe deſires, and will much oblige me by her future correſpondence. I am very loth to refuſe any thing to ſo fair a petitioner, as I take it for granted MATRONA is, and grieve that it is not in my power to accept her invitation at preſent, and oblige her by the interview which ſhe ſolicits. In any thing elſe ſhe may command me.

THE MICROCOSM.

No. IX.—MONDAY, *January* 29, 1787.

Sit quodvis ſimplex duntaxat & unum.

Be what you will ſo you be ſtill the ſame.—Rose.

THERE are few precepts, dictated like the above, by judgment and experience, which, though originally confined to a particular application (as this to the formation of Dramatic character) may not be adopted with ſucceſs in the ſeveral branches of the ſame ſcience, and even tranſferred into another. The direction which the poet gives us here, to preſerve a regard for ſimplicity and uniformity, may be applied to the general deſign and main ſtructure of a poem; and, if we allow them a ſtill greater latitude of interpretation, may be found to convey a very uſeful

rule with reſpect to the inferior component parts which conſtitute a work.

A venerable pile of Gothic architecture, viewed at a diſtance, or after the ſober hand of time has ſtripped it of the falſe glare of meretricious ornament, communicates a ſenſation which the ſame object under a cloſer inſpection in its higheſt degree of perfection, was incapable of producing; when the attention, ſolicited by a thouſand minutiæ with which the hand of caprice and ſuperſtition had crowded its object, was unavoidably diverted from the contemplation of the main deſign.

In all points which admit of heſitation, the ſiſter ſciences are found to throw a correſponding luſtre on each other. The impropriety of admitting ill-judged ornament, though connected as in the above inſtance with all that is awful and venerable, muſt be evident to the moſt ſuperficial obſerver; and this circumſtance ſhould lead us to conjecture, that the ſame principle exiſted in a ſimilar tho' ſuperior ſcience. Originality of ſentiment, vivacity of thought, and loftineſs of language may conduct the reader to the end of a work,

work, tho' awkwardly designed and injudiciously constructed; while the nicest adherence to poetic rule would be found insufficient to compensate for meanness of thought, or vulgarity of expression. That these two faults should infallibly destroy all title which any writer might otherwise have to the name of poet, should seem self-evident, and yet a fault which appears to be a composition of them both, has, I think, in some instances past without reprehension, I mean allusion to local circumstance: I shall therefore make this paper the vehicle of a few observations on this practice.

Nothing can be more directly adverse to the spirit of poetry, considered under one of its definitions as an universal language, than whatever confines it to the comprehension of a single people, or a particular period of time.

Blackmore, a name now grown to a bye word in criticism, in the original structure of his poem, was little, if at all, inferior to the great prototypes of antiquity; but that simplicity and uniformity so visible in the first design, was in every other respect conformably to the taste of his time, violated and neglected. It is said, that the most de-

solate

ſolate deſerts of Africa are diſtinguiſhed by little inſulated ſpots, cloathed with perpetual verdure; and it ſometimes happens, that beautiful paſſages preſent themſelves in the Prince Arthur, as in the firſt book,

The heavens ſerenely ſmil'd, and every ſail,
Fill'd its broad boſom with the indulgent gale.

But when lines like theſe occur, we muſt conſider it, to borrow an expreſſion from a contemporary Poet,—a gift no leſs

"Than that of manna in the Wilderneſs."

Scriptural alluſions like the foregoing, were much in faſhion among the Poets of that period; and in this particular, ſo earneſt a follower of it was not to be left behind: he has accordingly introduced his enchanter, Merlin, building ſeven altars, offering upon each a bullock and a ram, and attempting to curſe the army of the hero, in imitation of Balaam, and with the ſame ſucceſs.

Dryden himſelf is ſtrongly tinctured with the taſte of the times; and thoſe *Dalilahs of the Town*, to uſe his own expreſſion, are plentifully ſcattered throughout

throughout his works, eſteemed in the preſent age for thoſe paſſages only in which he ventured to oppoſe his own taſte to that of his readers, and which have already paſt the ordeal of unmerited cenſure.

Nor is that narrowneſs of conception which confines a work to the comprehenſion of a particular portion of individuals, leſs reprehenſible or leſs repugnant to the eſſential principles of poetry; and of this defect innumerable inſtances occur in both the authors above cited, with this difference, that in one inſtance we contemplate with regret the ſituation of an eminent genius conſtrained by his exigences to poſtpone the powers of his own taſte, and ſubmit his judgment to the arbitrary dominion of a prevailing mode; while in the other, we view with indifference, an author, ſpoilt indeed by the taſte of the times in which he lived, but who, had he not adopted their's, had moſt probably ſucceeded as ill by following his own. Nothing is ſo common, as in both theſe writers to meet with expreſſions and alluſions drawn from the meaneſt mechanical employments; at preſent infinitely diſguſting to the general ſcholar, and (a proof of the neceſſity of obſerving the rule we have

have endeavoured to illuſtrate) to a foreigner, acquainted only with the learned part of our language, entirely unintelligible*.

In the earlier ſtages of civilization, while the bonds of ſociety hang yet looſe upon the individual, before the benefits of mutual aſſiſtance and dependence are felt or underſtood, the ſavage, elate with the idea of abſolute independence, and unacquainted with all the advantages which accompany the arts of ſociety, looks down with ſupreme contempt on a ſtate, whoſe every individual is entirely dependent upon and connected with the community‖. The wretched Eſquimaux give themſelves the excluſive title of *men*, and the Indian of North America, beſtows on the Europeans, as compared with himſelf, the epithet of the *accurſed race*.

In a ſtate of abſolute barbariſm the arts of life are few, and agreeably to that all-ſufficiency which the

*I would not here be underſtood to hint at any ſimilarity in the original genius of theſe authors; were I to draw the line of affinity, I ſhould call Blackmore the caricatura of Dryden.

‖ Robertſon's Hiſtory of America, Book IV.

the ſavage ſo much affects, practiſed and underſtood by each individual. The Indian, unacquainted with the arts of poliſhed life, is to himſelf, what ſociety is to the members which compoſe it: he raiſes himſelf the roof of his humble hut, and ventures upon the ocean in the canoe which his own hands have hollowed; his weapons for war or for the chace are ſuch as his own induſtry, or ſometimes a caſual intercourſe with politer nations, have furniſhed for him*. The component members of barbarous ſocieties are ſeldom numerous, owing to the extreme difficulty which attends the education of infancy among the hazards and hardſhips of ſavage life, and join'd to it produces that extreme tenderneſs which all uncivilized communities entertain for the life of an individual. Were the numbers are comparatively few, the principle of patriotiſm is concentrated—the loſs or miſconduct of a North American Indian would be more ſenſibly felt by his tribe, than that of a thouſand Engliſhmen by the parent country.

It remains after a conſideration of the cauſes, to trace their effects in the artleſs eſſays of the more

* Robertſon's Hiſtory of America, Book IV.

more remote periods. Oſſian's poems, if allowed to be authentic, are the only ſpecimen of this ſpecies generally known; Homer, being, according to the teſtimony of Ariſtotle, poſterior to a long line of poets, his predeceſſors and perhaps his patterns: the decided preference given thro' every poem, to the nation, the family, and perſon of the poet, ſtrongly mark the national character as well as that of the times. Alluſions to the inferior arts are ſo unuſual and ſo ſimple as muſt ſpeak them in their firſt period of progreſſion; or evince a taſte and judgment in the author far beyond the times in which he is ſuppoſed to have flouriſhed. He is himſelf, agreeably to that idea of ſelf-importance, the invariable attendant on ſavage life, the hero of his own tale. Filial duty, and a regard to the merits of an illuſtrious warrior, might contribute to give Fingal a conſpicuous character in poems, the productions of his ſon; but no reaſon can be given why Oſſian, the *bard of ſong*, ſhould be the hero of it. "The Battle", ſays Regnor Lodbrog, a prince, pirate, and poet of a ſucceeding age, "is "grateful to me as the ſmile of a virgin in the "bloom of youth; as the kiſs of a young widow "in a retired apartment." An egotiſm which

moderns,

moderns muſt ſuppoſe agreeable to the character of thoſe times.—The pride of family, a prevailing paſſion where arts and commerce have not ſet mankind on a level, was indulged by the poet; who compriſed in his profeſſion that of the genealogiſt. Homer frequently traced the deſcent of his heroes into remote and fabulous antiquity; probably with a view to gratify ſuch of his patrons as piqued themſelves on their pedigree.

The poetry of ruder ages is ſeldom diſtinguiſhed for elegance of diction or variety of imagery; yet there are advantages ſo ſtrongly peculiar to it, as muſt raiſe it high in the eſteem of all admirers of nature, while yet ſimple and unſophiſticated. The ſtate of the arts, as yet rude and imperfect, renders it impoſſible to deviate from ſimplicity. The diſtinctions of property being as yet faintly delineated, no idea of ſuperiority can obtain but what ariſes from perſonal qualifications; and poetic praiſe, unproſtituted to power and wealth, muſt be the genuine tribute of gratitude and admiration. That property was in a very unſettled ſtate in the days of Homer, may be gathered from numberleſs paſſages in his writings; among the calamities which awaited an aged father on the death

death of his only ſon, the plunder of his poſſeſſions is mentioned; and Achilles laments, that life, unlike every other human poſſeſſion, was not to be obtained by theft. Accordingly in the epithets which accompany the name of each hero, through the Iliad and Odyſſey, we ſee no alluſions to the adventitious circumſtances of wealth and power, if we except the title of *lord of rich Mycenæ* ſometimes, though rarely beſtowed on Agamemnon. While the ſubtlety of Ulyſſes, the ſwiftneſs of Achilles, the courage and ſtrength of Diomed, are mentioned as often as the names of thoſe Heroes occur.

The intermediate ſtep between barbarity and perfection, is perhaps the leaſt favorable to the cultivation of poetry; for the *neceſſity* of writing with ſimplicity is taken away long before its *beauty* is diſcovered or attended to. The arts, if we may believe the picture of them, as exhibited in the ſhield of Achilles, had attained this intermediate ſtage of their progreſs in the days of Homer; and accordingly we find in the works of that great maſter, ſome alluſions to the meaner arts, as well as illuſtrations drawn from them; which,

which, however the antiquary might regard as throwing light on ſo remote a period, criticiſm muſt reject as repugnant to that ſimplicity and univerſality which form the eſſential characteriſtics of poetry. When Hector tells Paris that he deſerved *a coat of ſtone*, i. e. to be ſtoned to death, I cannot help ſuſpecting it to have been a cant word of that time; and am rather diſguſted than ſatisfied, to find the ſecurity which Neptune gives for Mars, was agreeable to the form of procedure in the Athenian courts. Though in this inſtance a modern, and eſpecially a modern of this Country, may be eaſily prejudiced; the laws here, by the uncouthneſs of their language, and other numberleſs particularities, wearing an air of ridicule by no means connected with the idea of laws in general. Yet, whatever allowances we admit in conſideration of the diſtant period which produced this patriarch of poetry and literature, and however we abſtract ourſelves from the prevailing prejudices of modern manners, we ſtill find ourſelves better pleaſed with thoſe images, which, from their ſimplicity in ſo long a period, have undergone the ſmalleſt variation. The following lines are perhaps the

moſt

moſt pleaſing to a modern reader of any in the whole Iliad.

What time in ſome ſequeſtered vale,
The weary woodman ſpreads his ſparing meal;
When his tir'd arms refuſe the axe to rear,
And claim a reſpite from the ſylvan war;
But not till half the proſtrate foreſt lay,
Stretch'd in long ruin, and expos'd to day.—POPE.

And it is a curious conſideration, that in a period which has exhauſted the variety of wealth and vanity, the ſimple life of the labourer has not undergone the moſt trifling alteration. Milton, a ſtrict obſerver as well as a conſtant imitator of the antients, has adopted the ſame idea in the following lines,

What time the labour'd ox,
With looſen'd traces from the furrow came,
And the ſwink'd hedger at his ſupper ſat.

The father of Engliſh poetry, like that of the Grecian, lived in a period little favourable to ſimplicity in poetry; and ſeveral meanneſſes occur throughout his works, which in an age more refined,

fined, or more barbarous, he muſt have avoided. We ſee among the *worthie* acts of *Duke* Theſeus,

How he took the nobil cite after,
And brent the walls and tore down roof and rafter.

And, among the horrid Images which crowd the temple of Mars,

The child ſtranglid in the cradil,
The coke ſcaldid for alle his long ladil.

That ſtate of equipoiſe between horror and laughter, which the mind muſt here experience, may be ranked among its moſt unpleaſing ſenſations.—The period at which the arts attain to their higheſt degree of perfection, may be eſteemed more favourable to the productions of the Muſes, than either of the foregoing; the mind is indulged in free retroſpect of antiquity, and ſometimes in conjectural glimpſes of futurity; with ſuch a field open before him, the objects which we muſt ſuppoſe ſhould more immediately attract the attention of the poet, would be the failure or ſucceſs of his predeceſſors; and the cauſes to which either was to be attributed. Pope has fully avail'd himſelf of the dear-bought experience of all who went before

before him; there is perhaps no poet more entirely free from this failing. I ſhall however only cite one inſtance in which he may ſeem to have carried his regard for ſimplicity ſo far, as to ſhew himſelf guilty of inaccuracy and inattention.

The hungry judges now the ſentence ſign,
And wretches hang that jurymen may dine.

That judges in England never *ſign* a ſentence is well known; and hunger, whatever effect it might have had on the jurymen of antient days, with thoſe of modern times ſeems to operate rather as an incitement to mercy.—*Clifden's proud alcove* has not at preſent, and probably never had, any exiſtence; but the fault, if any there is, ſeems rather that of the language than of the poet: or perhaps, after all, it was mere penury of rhime, and a diſtreſs ſimilar to that which made him in another place hunt his poor dab-chick into *a copſe* where it was never ſeen but in the Dunciad.

After ſo much ſaid on the ſubject of local alluſions, and terms of art, it cannot but occur to me, that I have myſelf ſometimes fallen into the error which I have here reprehended, and adopted phraſes

phraſes and expreſſions unintelligible, except to the little circle to which my labours were at firſt confined; an error I ſhall cautiouſly avoid for the future: for how little claim ſoever the lucubrations of GREGORY GRIFFIN may have to public notice, or a protracted term of exiſtence, he is unwilling to abridge either by wilful continuance in an acknowledged error.

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THE MICROCOSM.

No. X.—MONDAY, *February* 5, 1787.

Et ſilicis venis abſtruſum, excuderet ignem.—VIRG.
And ſtruck the impriſon'd ſpark from veins of Stone.

MANKIND in general, when they contemplate the records of thoſe illuſtrious for Patriotiſm, Philoſophy, Poetry, or any other qualities which entitle them to immortality, are inclined to complain of the dearth of abilities and paucity of true Genius obſervable in all ages. Genius, exclaims the diſcontented complainant, is given but with a ſparing hand; inſtead of moving in a regular orbit as the Planet, its Courſe is lawleſs as the Comet's; inſtead of diffuſing the permanent rays of the Sun, it glitters only with the dazzling glare of the lightning; it is quick and tranſitory, and like the Phœnix, appears not once in a century.—Such is the

the uſual outcry of thoſe, who love to turn good into evil; to depreciate the dignity of man, and undervalue the works of their creator. The arguments by which they ſupport this hypotheſis are plauſible; they obſerve, that illuſtrious men have generally flouriſhed not in a continued ſeries, when the loſs of one was ſupplied by a ſucceſſor equally capable; but in a collective body. After their demiſe, nature, as exhauſted by ſuch an unuſual effort, has ſunk into a lethargy, and ſlept for ages. Theſe Sons of Fame, like the brighter conſtellations of the Heavens, obſcure by their ſuperior ſplendor the infinite hoſts of Stars which are ſcattered through the regions of endleſs ſpace. To eſtabliſh this poſition, they inſtance the noted reigns of Auguſtus, Charles, Ann, and Louis. The reſpectable names of Virgil, Horace, Ovid, Tibullus, Propertius, Livy, and the other glories of this learned age are produced: Milton, Dryden, Tillotſon, and Clarendon, with Pope, Swift, Arbuthnot, Bolingbroke, Addiſon, Corneille, Racine, and Moliere, ſeem to corroborate this aſſertion. But let us examine with impartiality, and the deception will be detected. Can we ſuppoſe, that nature has ſcattered her bleſſings with more profuſion to one age than

another; or, that like an unfeeling ſtep-mother, ſhe has robbed one child of its portion to enrich the other? Rather has not the univerſality of her influence been equally extended to all? Whence then, it is required, whence originates that inequality of Genius and Learning, which is ſo incontrovertibly conſpicuous in the annals of Hiſtory? The anſwer is brief, from the difference of cultivation: The moſt fertile fields will, if neglected, be overrun with weeds; and the bramble will choak the luxuriance of the floweret. How many neglected ſpots are concealed in the wilds of Africa; how many tracts, ſeemingly oppreſſed with the curſe of ſterility, have, by the aſſiſtance of art, teemed with the fruits of cultivation. The human mind is that luxuriant field, rich in the gifts of nature; but requiring the foſtering care of education, to raiſe the imperfect ſeed to the maturity of the full grown crop.

I will venture to affirm, that neither the dark ages of the latter Roman Empire, nor the darker ones which ſucceeded, (the period when human nature was at its loweſt ebb, and had relapſed into the barbariſm from which the ſuperior wiſdom of the firſt race of man had raiſed it) were deficient in

in Genius, if opportunity had called forth its powers. Statius and Claudian undoubtedly poſſeſſed the fire ſo requiſite to form the poet; and the excellent Boethius, martyred by the cruel policy of the imperial court, was born to grace a more ſplendid æra. To deſcend ſtill deeper into this region of darkneſs, even ſo late as the cloſing years of the Greek Empire, the Princeſs Anna Comnena, to the eminence of her illuſtrious birth, joined the milder glories of Arts and Literature. Thomas Aquinas, Duns Scotus, and the other Schoolmen ſhew an acuteneſs of reaſon, and comprehenſion of mind, employed indeed on ſubtle niceties and frivolous diſtinctions; but which, under the direction of a better taſte, might have explored the profoundeſt depths of true Philoſophy. The Roſicrucians, with other chemical projectors, in the courſe of an extravagant ſearch after an imaginary Menſtruum, ſtumbled on many uſeful diſcoveries in that curious ſcience. Pope Silveſter, with his illuſtrious follower, Friar Bacon, who were for their extraordinary knowledge deemed Magicians by the ignorant multitude, and who were both, for the honour of our nation, Engliſhmen, directing their ſtudies to the proper ends of Philoſophy, were the harbingers of that glorious

light which has ſince blazed out. Charlemagne and Alfred are characters which might dignify the annals of any Hiſtorian, as Warriors and Legiſlators; the firſt ſoftened the rigours of the feudal ſyſtem ſo peculiarly adapted to bind mankind in indiſſoluble chains; the other bleſſed his native land with liberty, and laid the firſt foundations of that conſtitution, which has ſince proved the envy and admiration of Europe. Theſe few illuſtrious names, which are the ſole ornaments of ſo many ages only feebly enlightened, were not able to diſpel the ſurrounding clouds; their rays, ſcattered through ſuch an extenſive ſpace, only ſerved to make

"*Darkneſs viſible,*"

and when the poet exclaimed

"*Sint Mæcœnates, non deerunt Flacce, Marones,*"

Let Sheffields ſmile and Drydens ſtill ſhall writ

he aſſerted that, to which experience has ſince given the ſanction of Truth.

It is not to be doubted, but that many a man, whoſe powers of mind might have carried him to the higheſt pitch of human glory, has languiſhed in obſcurity for want of thoſe opportunities, or that patronage, which calls forth the powers of the

the ſoul. Thoſe few to whom their better fortune has granted this envied lot, ſufficiently prove this poſition; and many of the moſt excellent of the latter Roman Emperors, left the more humble roofs of their native cottages, for the ſplendid magnificence of the imperial palace.

But the land of liberty is the ſoil favorable to the rearing theſe latent ſeeds; and it has been obſerved, that tho' Genius may flouriſh awhile under the exotic warmth of arbitrary power, its bloſſom is but periſhable: it languiſhes under the nipping blaſts of oppreſſion; and pines for the more congenial Sun of Freedom. The iron ſway of ſlavery cruſhes the ſoul as well as body.

Animum quoque prægravat una,
Atque affigit humo divinæ particulam auræ.
Weighs down the portion of celeſtial birth,
The breath of God, and fixes it to Earth.—FRANCIS.

That I may not ſeem to aſſert an improbability, let us examine the different ſtates of literature in the commonwealths of Greece and Rome, under the dominion of the Cæſars. An objection is now eaſily ſtarted, viz. that the Auguſtan age is the great æra of Roman Literature; and that under

the commonwealth the advances towards the politer arts were ſlow and difficult. The fact is, that the Romans, during the firſt centuries, were too deeply engaged in their foreign and domeſtic wars, to attend to the milder occupations of Peace. Self preſervation naturally engages the attention of man, prior to all other conſiderations; when that is ſecured, he has leiſure to look around him, and make his firſt attempts in the Sciences. In the earlier, rude, and martial times the Trumpet drowned the notes of the Lyre; in thoſe times therefore, the Genius moſt ſuitable to the age, ſhone with diſtinguiſhed luſtre; this was the age of Patriotiſm and Conqueſt, and military merit was the only certain road to the dignities of the Republic. When Rome was ſubjected to Cæſar, her Empire extended over the then known world. The Grecian elegance had ſoftened her rougher Genius; and Science had poliſhed the ferocity of her manners. The laurel of conqueſt faded before the olive of peace; and literary merit became the object of attention. Auguſtus only eſtabliſhed that of which others had laid the foundations; Ennius, Terence, Lucretius, Catullus, and Salluſt were prior to him; and the Roman eloquence, which

was

was born, and which died with Cicero, ſunk under the malignity of his influence. It is worth remarking, that tho' the Auguſtan age produced the beſt Poets, yet Eloquence fled with Freedom; after the death of Cicero ſhe degenerated from her purer ſtrains, into the laboured phraſes of affected declamation. Poetry, which is ſo noted for its ſuppleneſs, flouriſhed only for a few years; and probably owed its temporary vigour to the mean proſtitution of its talents, in flattering the Enſlaver of his Country, and the Tyrant of the World.

Greece on the contrary produced a continued ſeries of great and learned men; ſhe was not like Rome, forced to ſtruggle for her liberty and exiſtence againſt the jealouſy of ſurrounding ſtates. After the deciſive battles of Marathon, Platæa, and Salamis, her internal diſſenſions were her only enemies; but even theſe promoted rather than impeded the powers of her Genius. To the Peloponneſian war we owe the hiſtory of Thucydides, the funeral orations of Pericles and Plato, and to the treachery of Philip the ſublime invectives of Demoſthenes; but when the conquering Eagle of Rome, under the pretence of protecting, enſlaved the country, from that moment her Genius wi-

thered; and the only writers ſhe afterwards produced, Polybius in particular, inſtead of recording the glories of their native country, celebrated the exploits of Rome. Rome therefore, now the uncontrouled Miſtreſs of the world, was expected to excel in arts as well as arms; under Auguſtus, as before obſerved, ſhe flouriſhed for a time, but under the ſucceeding Emperors ſhe relapſed into the ignorance, tho' ſhe poſſeſſed not the virtues of the Conſular State. The feeble efforts which Learning afterwards made to recover her ancient preeminence, ſeem to confirm the poſition, that under liberty alone ſhe can acquire a permanent ſtrength.

Under the happy reigns of Veſpaſian, Trajan, and the better Emperors, the ſhort lived ray of returning Freedom awaked her from her lethargy; and Juvenal, the Plinies, and Tacitus, are enrolled in the laſt liſt of Roman worthies.—The works of the two Plinies might have been produced under any reign, however tyrannical.—The ſtudies of the Naturaliſt could never awaken the jealouſy of the moſt capricious Tyrant; and the Panegyric of the younger Pliny was a piece of complimentary flattery, which muſt be acceptable to the ears of any Prince. Of his letters it has been truly obſerved,

ſerved, that they are only elegant trifles. In Cicero's collection we find a hiſtory of the times, the characters of the greateſt men delineated with ſpirit, and his ſentiments delivered with a Roman freedom. Pliny was overawed by the terrors of Deſpotiſm, and dared not to venture on topics which might rouſe the anger of his Sovereign; but that Juvenal and Tacitus adorned this period, muſt unconteſtibly be the effect of at leaſt ſome degree of liberty; otherwiſe the unſparing laſh of the Satiriſt would not have attacked the moſt powerful men of Rome; or the bold pen of the Hiſtorian dared to diſplay the actions of the former Emperors with ſuch freedom of cenſure, ſo odiouſly and yet ſo juſtly. He would have been contented with a bare relation, and left the reader to make thoſe obſervations, which tho' he could not but have felt, he would have been afraid to give vent to; eſpecially when Juvenal, in the reign of Domitian, had been baniſhed for a ſlight reflection on an inſignificant actor.

As in the courſe of this paper many of the great names of antiquity have been mentioned, I cannot help noticing the aſſertion of a very learned man, in which his partiality for the ancients ſeems to

have hurried him on beyond due lengths. I refer the Reader to the 127th paper, 4th vol. of the Adventurer, from whence the following is extracted, "The age will never again return, when "a Pericles, after walking with Plato in a Portico built by Phidias, and painted by Apelles, "might repair to hear a pleading of Demosthenes, "or a tragedy of Sophocles."

Unless this passage is more accurately considered, it seems to give the decisive turn against the moderns; and presents a formidable list of great names to which we have but few to oppose. But if we examine the Chronological order, we shall find, that Pericles, Phidias, and Sophocles, were hardly contemporaries, Pericles dying in the 87th Olympiad; but Demosthenes, who was contemporary with Apelles, did not pronounce his first Philippic till the 107th, and Plato died in the 108th. The reader who would wish to know the more particular dates, I refer to Tallent's chronology, who has regulated his by Scaliger's tables.—From this it will appear, that tho' a Pericles might have walked in a Portico built by Phidias, it could not have been painted by Apelles; and tho' he might have heard a tragedy of Sophocles,

he

he could not have converſed with Plato, or repaired to a pleading of Demoſthenes. I might with equal juſtice ſay, the time will never return, when an Alfred, after walking with Bacon in a portico built by Wren, or painted by Weſt, might repair to hear a ſpeech of Chatham's, or a Tragedy of Shakeſpeare's. Surely this is an unfair mode of compariſon, and to take a hint from his own motto,

Si veteres ita miratur laudatque;
Ut nihil anteferat, nihil illis comparet, errat.

But oft they labour under great miſtakes,
As when their ancients laviſhly they raiſe,
Above all modern rivalſhip and praiſe.—FRANCIS.

But to return to my ſubject. From the variety of concurring accidents and combination of circumſtances which are ſo neceſſary, if not to form, at leaſt to force Genius into notice, it is more to be wondered at, that ſo many great characters have, than that more have not exiſted. True it is, that there are ſome, who are by nature endowed with ſuch powers of mind, that they have riſen ſuperior to all ſurrounding impediments; but the number of theſe tranſcendent men are comparatively few with thoſe who have rendered themſelves

themſelves eminent from the fortuitous concurrence of lucky circumſtances. To any one who attentively conſiders the variety of characters which may be met with in a large public ſchool, the following will appear no unimportant circumſtance. He cannot but obſerve the great number of boys, who by their natural abilities and early attainments ſeem to promiſe future greatneſs; and who, provided they had all an equal chance of ſucceeding in the world, might attain the heights of excellence. Yet how few of them in their maturer years fulfil thoſe expectations, which the earlieſt period of their life ſo juſtly excited.—The reaſon is evident, when at School they had full and fair ſcope for the exerciſe of their talents; they were fired with emulation, animated by the hope of glory. Envy had not as yet tainted the purity of the breaſt; and every one honeſtly confeſſed his admiration of their ſuperior powers. When they enter the larger Theatre of the World, the caſe is widely different: The paſſions then take a larger range; Envy, and all the blacker ones expand themſelves. One man hides himſelf in the obſcurity of what miſtaken philoſophy calls a life of retirement and eaſe, that is, of indolence and ſloth; another deſtroys himſelf in the exceſſes of licentious

tious pleaſure; here diſtreſſed merit pines in want and obſcurity; there the bent of the ſoul is miſtaken, and the injudicious and arbitrary will of a Parent or a Guardian, forces it into that line, where its luſtre is darkened and its powers fail. For the human mind, in ſpite of the pride of wiſdom, and vanity of ſelf-complacency, is confined to a narrow ſphere; tho' ſome men by the univerſality of their attainments, and verſatility of their powers, ſeem to contradict this aſſertion, yet, thoſe inſtances are ſo rare, as ſcarce to form an exception to the general rule. Newton is great as an aſtronomer, and Chatham as a ſtateſman; when confined to their own proper paths, their abilities are wonderful, their glory conſequently great; but place a Chatham at the aſtronomical calculation of a Newton, or a Newton at the helm of ſtate, their reſpective worth is immediately loſt, and they both would ſink to the level of common mortals. Genius then, if not totally buried, is often perverted, and its powers rendered ineffectual. Pope obſerved of a certain illuſtrious character, "*How ſweet an Ovid in a Murray loſt,*" and it is not to be doubted, but that the abilities of many have been equally diſtorted from their natural bent.

I am inclined to think, that the maxim

"*That as the twig is bent the tree's inclin'd,*"

is not univerſally tho' generally true. Rather like a tree forced from its natural ſituation, it will, when left to the exerciſe of its own powers, recoil with the greater violence. We may remember that Addiſon was made a ſecretary of ſtate, and Swift, if he had liſtened to King William, would have been a Cornet of Horſe.—How little the talents of the one were adapted to his office is well known; what a figure the Author of the Tale of a Tub would have made as a Cornet, I leave to my readers to judge. The Attic elegance and poliſhed wit of Addiſon was loſt amidſt the turbulence of State intrigues; and the keen ſarcaſtic Genius of Swift was by no means fitted for the camp; unleſs it can be proved, that humour can gain a battle, or ſatire take a town.

THE MICROCOSM.

No. XI.—MONDAY, *February* 12, 1787.

Res geſtas regumque, ducumque, et triſtia bella,
Quo ſcribi poſſint numero, monſtravit Homerus.—HOR.

By Homer taught, the modern Poet ſings,
In Epic ſtrains, of heroes, wars, and Kings.—FRAN.

THERE are certain forms and etiquettes in life, which though the neglect of them does not amount to the commiſſion of a crime, or the violation of a duty, are yet ſo eſtabliſhed by example, and ſanctioned by cuſtom, as to paſs into Statutes, equally acknowledged by ſociety, and almoſt equally binding to individuals, with the laws of the land, or the precepts of morality. A man guilty of breaking theſe, though he cannot be tranſported for a felon, or indicted for

for treaſonable practices, is yet, in the High Court of Cuſtom, branded as a flagrant offender againſt decorum, as notorious for an unprecedented infringement on propriety.

There is no race of men on whom theſe laws are more ſevere than Authors; and no ſpecies of Authors more ſubject to them, than Periodical Eſſayiſts. *Homer* having preſcribed the form, or, to uſe a more modern phraſe, *ſet the faſhion* of *Epic Poems*, whoever preſumes to deviate from his plan, muſt not hope to participate his dignity: And whatever method, *The Spectator*, *The Guardian*, and others, who firſt adopted this ſpecies of writing, have purſued in their undertaking, is ſet down as a rule for the conduct of their followers; which, whoever is bold enough to tranſgreſs, is accuſed of a deviation from the original deſign, and a breach of eſtabliſhed regulation.

It has hitherto been cuſtomary for all Periodical Writers, to take ſome opportunity, in the courſe of their labours, to diſplay their Critical abilities, either by making obſervations on ſome popular Author, and work of known character, or by bringing forth the performances of hidden merit, and

and throwing light on genius in obſcurity. To the critiques of *The Spectator*, *Shakspear*, and more particularly, *Milton*, are indebted, for no inconſiderable ſhare of the reputation, which they now ſo univerſally enjoy; and by his means were the more graces, and more ſimple beauties of *Chevy Chace* held up to public view, and recommended to general admiration.

I ſhould probably be accuſed of ſwerving from the imitation of ſo great an example, were not I to take occaſion to ſhew that I too am not entirely deſtitute of abilities of this kind; but that by poſſeſſing a decent ſhare of critical diſcernment, and critical jargon, I am capable of becoming a very tolerable commentator. For the proof of which, I ſhall rather prefer calling the attention of my readers to [illegible] object [illegible] untreated of by any [illegible] mediate predeceſſors, than venture to throw in my obſervations on any work which has before paſſed the ordeal of frequent examination. And this I ſhall do for two reaſons; partly, becauſe were I to chuſe a field, how fertile ſoever, of which many others had before me been reaping the fruits, mine would be at beſt but the gleanings of criticiſm; and partly, from a more intereſted

ested view, from a selfish desire of accumulated praise; since, by making a work, as yet almost wholly unknown, the subject of my consideration, I shall acquire the reputation of taste, as well as judgment;—of judiciousness in selection, as well as justness in observation;—of propriety in choosing the object, as well as skill in using the language, of commentary.

The *Epic Poem* on which I shall ground my present critique, has for its chief characteristics, brevity and simplicity. The Author,—whose name I lament that I am, in some degree, prevented from consecrating to immortal fame, by not knowing what it is—the Author, I say, has not branched his poem into excressences of episode, or prolixities of digression; it is neither variegated with diversity of unmeaning similitudes, nor glaring with the garnish of unnatural metaphor. The whole is plain and uniform; so much so indeed, that I should hardly be surprised if some morose readers were to conjecture, that the poet had been thus simple rather from necessity than choice; that he had been restrained not so much by chastity of judgment, as sterility of imagination.

Nay,

Nay, some there may be perhaps, who will dispute his claim to the title of an *Epic Poet;* and will endeavour to degrade him even to the rank of a *ballad-monger*. But I, as his Commentator, will contend for the dignity of my Author; and will plainly demonstrate his Poem to be an *Epic Poem*, agreeable to the example of all Poets, and the consent of all Critics heretofore.

First, it is universally agreed, that an *Epic Poem* should have three component parts; *a beginning, a middle*, and *an end;*—secondly, it is allowed, that it should have one *grand action*, or *main design*, to the forwarding of which all the parts of it should directly or indirectly tend; and that this design should be in some measure consonant with, and conducive to, the purposes of *Morality*;—and thirdly, it is indisputably decreed, that it should have *a Moral*. I trust that in none of these points the poem before us will be found deficient. There are other inferior properties, which I shall consider in due order.

Not to keep my readers longer in suspense, the subject of the poem is "*The Reformation of the Knave of Hearts.*" It is not improbable, that some

may

may object to me that a *Knave* is an unworthy Hero for an Epic Poem; that a Hero ought to be all that is great and good. The objection is frivolous. The greateſt work of this kind that the World has ever produced, has "*The Devil*" for its Hero; and ſupported as my author is by ſo great a precedent, I contend, that his Hero is a very decent Hero; and eſpecially as he has the advantage of *Milton's*, by reforming at the end, is evidently entitled to a competent ſhare of celebrity.

I ſhall now proceed to the more immediate examination of the poem in its different parts. The *beginning*, ſay the Critics, ought to be plain and ſimple; neither embelliſhed with the flowers of poetry, nor turgid with pompoſity of diction. In this how exactly does our Author conform to the eſtabliſhed opinion! He begins thus:

"*The Queen of Hearts*
"*She made some Tarts*"—

Can any thing be more clear! more natural! more agreeable to the true ſpirit of ſimplicity! Here are no tropes,—no figurative expreſſions,—not even ſo much as an invocation to the Muſe. He does not detain his readers by any needleſs circumlocution; by unneceſſarily informing them, what

what he *is* going to ſing; or ſtill more unneceſſarily enumerating what he *is not* going to ſing: but according to the precept of Horace,

——————————*in medias res,*
Non ſecus ac notas, auditorem rapit,——

That is, he at once introduces us, and ſets us on the moſt eaſy and familiar footing imaginable, with her Majeſty of Hearts, and intereſts us deeply in her domeſtic concerns. But to proceed;

"*The Queen of Hearts*
"*She made ſome Tarts,*
"*All on a Summer's Day.*"

Here indeed the proſpect brightens, and we are led to expect ſome livelineſs of imagery, ſome warmth of poetical colouring;—but here is no ſuch thing.—There is no taſk more difficult to a Poet, than that of *Rejection*. *Ovid*, among the ancients, and *Dryden*, among the moderns, were perhaps the moſt remarkable for the want of it. The latter from the haſte in which he generally produced his compoſitions, ſeldom paid much attention to the "*limæ labor*," or the labour of correction," and ſeldom therefore rejected the aſſiſtance of any idea that preſented itſelf. *Ovid*, not content with catching the leading features of any ſcene or character, indulged himſelf in a thouſand

minutiæ

minutiæ of deſcription, a thouſand puerile prettineſſes, which were in themſelves unintereſting, and took off greatly from the effect of the whole; as the numberleſs ſuckers, and ſtraggling branches of a fruit-tree, if permitted to ſhoot out unreſtrained, while they are themſelves barren and uſeleſs, diminiſh conſiderably the vigour of the parent ſtock. *Ovid* had more genius, but leſs judgment than *Virgil*; *Dryden* more imagination, but leſs correctneſs than *Pope*; had they not been deficient in theſe points, the former would certainly have equalled, the latter infinitely outſhone the merits of his countryman.—*Our Author* was undoubtedly poſſeſſed of that power which they wanted; and was cautious not to indulge too far the ſallies of a lively imagination. Omitting therefore any mention of—ſultry Sirius,—ſilvan ſhade,—ſequeſtered [illegible],—verdant hills,—purling rills,—moſſy [illegible],—gurgling fountains,—&c. &c.—he ſimply tells us that it was "*All on a Summer's Day.*" For my own part, I confeſs, that I find myſelf rather flattered than diſappointed; and conſider the Poet as rather paying a compliment to the abilities of his readers, than baulking their expectations. It is certainly a great pleaſure to ſee a picture well painted; but it

is

is a much greater to paint it well oneſelf. This therefore I look upon as a ſtroke of excellent management in the Poet. Here every reader is at liberty to gratify his own taſte; to deſign for himſelf juſt what ſort of "*Summer's Day*" he likes beſt; to chooſe his own ſcenery; diſpoſe his lights and ſhades as he pleaſes; to ſolace himſelf with a rivulet, or a horſe-pond,—a ſhower, or a ſun-beam,—a grove, or a kitchen garden, according to his fancy. How much more conſiderate this, than if the Poet had, from an affected accuracy of deſcription, thrown us into an unmannerly perſpiration by the heat of the atmoſphere; forced us into a landſcape of his own planning, with perhaps a paltry good-for-nothing zephyr or two, and a limited quantity of wood and water.—All this *Ovid* would undoubtedly have done. Nay, to uſe the expreſſion of a learned brother-commentator, "*quovis pignore decertem*" "I would lay any wager," that he would have gone ſo far as to tell us what the tarts were made of; and perhaps wandered into an epiſode on the art of preſerving cherries. But *our Poet*, above ſuch conſiderations, leaves every reader to chooſe his own ingredients, and ſweeten them to his own liking; wiſely foreſeeing, no doubt, that the more palatable each had rendered them to his own

own taſte, the more he would be affected at their approaching loſs.

"*All on a Summer's Day.*"

I cannot leave this line without remarking, that one of the *Scribleri*, a deſcendant of the famous *Martinus*, has expreſſed his ſuſpicions of the text being corrupted here, and propoſes, inſtead of "*All on*" reading "*Alone*," alledging, in favour of this alteration, the effect of Solitude in raiſing the paſſions. But *Hiccius Doctius*, a High Dutch commentator, one nevertheleſs well verſed in Britiſh literature, in a note of his uſual length and learning, has confuted the arguments of *Scriblerius*. In ſupport of the preſent reading, he quotes a paſſage from a poem written about the ſame period with our author's, by the celebrated *Johannes Paſtor**, intituled "*An Elegiac Epiſtle to the Turnkey of Newgate*," wherein the gentleman declares, that rather indeed in compliance with an old cuſtom, than to gratify any particular wiſh of his own, he is going

——"*All hal'ed for to be*
"*Upon that fatal Tyburn tree.*"

Now

* More commonly known, I believe, by the appellation of *Jack Shepherd*.

Now as nothing throws greater light on an author, than the concurrence of a contemporary writer, I am inclined to be of *Hiccius's* opinion, and to conſider the "*All*" as an elegant expletive, or, as he more aptly phraſes it "*elegans expletivum.*" The paſſage therefore muſt ſtand thus,

"*The Queen of Hearts*
"*She made ſome Tarts,*
"*All on a Summer's Day.*"

And thus ends the firſt part, or *beginning*; which is ſimple and unembelliſhed; opens the ſubject in a natural and eaſy manner; excites, but does not too far gratify our curioſity: for a reader of accurate obſervation may eaſily diſcover, that the *Hero* of the Poem has not, as yet, made his appearance.

I could not continue my examination at preſent through the whole of this Poem, without far exceeding the limits of a ſingle paper. I have therefore divided it into two; but ſhall not delay the publication of the ſecond to another week, as that, beſides breaking the connection of criticiſm, would materially injure the *unities* of the Poem.

I cannot commit this paper to the public, without taking notice of an opinion, which has lately been diſſeminated by ſome people, viz. That the MICROCOSM, previous to its publication, is ſubjected to the criticiſm of my ſuperiors, or, (in their own words) "*looked over by Uſhers.*" This idea is wrong in two points; firſt, as being miſerably *unclaſſical* in *phraſe*, and ſecondly as being extremely *falſe* in *information*.

Slaves cannot live in *England*; *Ireland* enjoys an immunity from *toads*; in a ſimilar degree is the climate and conſtitution of *Eton*, utterly unadapted to the exiſtence of "*Uſhers.*"--And however flattering it might be to *Gregory Griffin*, that his works ſhould be conſidered as the compoſitions of riper years; he cannot but think this opinion an unworthy compliment to the genius and abilities of thoſe, to whom they are, in part, aſcribed.

I think it therefore my duty, by this declaration, to "*take all my imperfections on my own head*;" and to aſſure the public, that little as the merit may be of theſe compoſitions, they are not "*uſhered*" into the world by thoſe, who are degraded by the ſuppoſition; the Aſſiſtant directors of *Eton* Education.

THE MICROCOSM.

No. XII.—MONDAY, *February* 12, 1787.

——————Servetur ad imum,
Qualis ab incepto proceſſerit, et ſibi conſtet.
" HORACE.

From his firſt Entrance, to the cloſing Scene,
Let him one equal Character maintain.
FRANCIS

HAVING thus gone through the firſt part, or *beginning* of the Poem, we may, naturally enough, proceed to the conſideration of the ſecond.

The ſecond part, or *middle*, is the proper place for buſtle and buſineſs; for incident and adventure.

" *The Knave of Hearts*
" *He ſtole thoſe Tarts.*"

Here attention is awakened; and our whole ſouls are intent upon the firſt appearance of the

Hero. Some readers may perhaps be offended at his making his *entrè* in ſo diſadvantageous a character as that of a *thief*. To this I plead precedent.

The Hero of the Iliad, as I obſerved in a former paper, is made to lament very pathetically, —that "life is not like all other poſſeſſions, to "be acquired by theft."—A reflection, in my opinion, evidently ſhewing, that, if he *did* refrain from the practice of this ingenious art, it was not from want of an inclination that way. We may remember too, that in *Virgil's* poem, almoſt the firſt light in which the *Pious Æneas* appears to us, is a *deer-ſtealer*; nor is it much excuſe for him, that the deer were wandering without keepers; for however he might, from this circumſtance, have been unable to aſcertain whoſe property they were; he might, I think, have been pretty well aſſured that they were not *his*.

Having thus acquitted our Hero of miſconduct, by the example of his betters, I proceed to what I think the Maſter-Stroke of the Poet.

"*The Knave of Hearts*
"*He ſtole thoſe Tarts,*
"*And — took them — quite away!!!*"

Here

Here, whoever has an ear for harmony, and a heart for feeling, muſt be touched! There is a deſponding melancholy in the run of the laſt line! an air of tender regret in the addition of "*quite away!*" a ſomething ſo expreſſive of irrecoverable loſs! ſo forcibly intimating the "*Ah nunquam reditura!*" "They never can return!" in ſhort, ſuch an union of ſound and ſenſe, as we rarely, if ever meet with in any author, ancient or modern. Our feelings are all alive—but the Poet, wiſely dreading that our ſympathy with the injured Queen might alienate our affections from his Hero, contrives immediately to awaken our fears for him, by telling us, that

"*The King of Hearts*
"*Call'd for thoſe Tarts,*"—

We are all conſcious of the fault of our Hero, and all trembling with him, for the puniſhment which the enraged Monarch may inflict;

"*And beat the Knave—full ſore!*

The fatal blow is ſtruck! We cannot but rejoice that guilt is juſtly puniſhed, though we ſympathize with the guilty object of puniſhment. Here *Scriblerus*, who, by the bye, is very fond of making unneceſſary alterations, propoſes reading "*Score*" inſtead of "*ſore*" meaning thereby to

particularize, that the beating beſtowed by this Monarch, conſiſted of *twenty* ſtripes. But this proceeds from his ignorance of the genius of our language, which does not admit of ſuch an expreſſion as "*full ſcore*," but would require the inſertion of the particle "*a*," which cannot be, on account of the metre. And this is another great artifice of the Poet: by leaving the quantity of beating indeterminate, he gives every reader the liberty to adminiſter it, in exact proportion to the ſum of indignation which he may have conceived againſt his Hero; that by thus amply ſatisfying their reſentment, they may be the more eaſily reconciled to him afterwards.

"*The King of Hearts*
"*Call'd for thoſe Tarts,*
"*And beat the Knave full ſore!*"

Here ends the ſecond part, or *middle* of the poem; in which we ſee the character, and exploits of the Hero, pourtrayed with the hand of a maſter.

Nothing now remains to be examined, but the third part, or *End*. In the *End*, it is a rule pretty well eſtabliſhed, that the Work ſhould draw towards a concluſion, which our Author manages thus.

"*The*

"*The Knave of Hearts*
"*Brought back thoſe Tarts.*"

Here every thing is at length ſettled; the theft is compenſated; the tarts reſtored to their right owner; and *Poetical Juſtice*, in every reſpect, ſtrictly, and impartially adminiſtered.

We may obſerve, that there is nothing in which our poet has better ſucceeded, than in keeping up an unremitted attention in his readers to the main inſtruments, the machinery of his poem, viz. The *Tarts*; inſomuch, that the aforementioned *Scriblerus* has ſagely obſerved, that "he can't tell, but he doesn't know, but the "tarts may be reckoned the heroes of the Poem." *Scriblerus*, though a man of learning, and frequently right in his opinion, has here certainly hazarded a raſh conjecture. His arguments are overthrown entirely by his great opponent, *Hiccius*, who concludes, by triumphantly aſking, "Had the tarts been eaten, how could the Poet "have compenſated for the loſs of his Heroes?"

We are now come to the *denouement*, the ſetting all to rights: and our Poet, in the management of his *moral*, is certainly ſuperior to his great ancient

predeceſſors. The moral of their fables, if any they have, is ſo interwoven with the main body of their work, that in endeavouring to unravel it, we ſhould tear the whole. *Our Author* has very properly preſerved his whole and entire for the *end* of his poem, where he completes his *main deſign*, the *Reformation* of his Hero, thus,

"*And vow'd he'd ſteal no more.*"

Having in the courſe of his work, ſhewn the bad effects ariſing from theft, he evidently means this laſt moral reflection, to operate with his readers as a gentle and polite diſſuaſive from ſtealing.

"*The Knave of Hearts*
"*Brought back thoſe Tarts,*
"*And vow'd he'd ſteal no more!*"

Thus have I induſtriouſly gone through the ſeveral parts of this wonderful Work; and clearly proved it, in every one of theſe parts, and in all of them together, to be a *due and proper Epic Poem*; and to have as good a right to that title, from its adherence to preſcribed rules, as any of the celebrated maſter-pieces of antiquity. And here I cannot help again lamenting, that, by not knowing the name of the Author, I am unable to twine our laurels together; and to tranſmit to poſterity

the

the mingled praiſes of Genius, and Judgment; of the Poet, and his Commentator.

Having ſome ſpace left in this paper, I will now, with the permiſſion of my readers of the *great world*, addreſs myſelf more particularly to my fellow-citizens.

To them the eſſay which I have here preſented, will, I flatter myſelf, be peculiarly ſerviceable at this time; and I would earneſtly recommend an attentive peruſal of it to all of them whoſe muſes are engaged in compoſitions of the Epic kind.—I am very much afraid that I may run into the error, which I have myſelf pointed out, of becoming too *local*, — but where it is evidently intended for the good of my fellow citizens, it may, I hope, be now and then pardonable. At the preſent juncture, as many have applied for my aſſiſtance, I cannot find in my heart to refuſe it them. Were I to attempt fully explaining, why, at the *preſent juncture*, I fear it would be vain. Would it not ſeem incredible to the Ladies, were I to tell them, that the period approaches, when upwards of a hundred *Epic Poems** will be expoſed

* Bacchus; aboliſhed in the ſucceeding year.

to public view, moſt of them nearly of equal length, and many of them nearly of equal merit, with the one which I have here taken into conſideration; illuſtrated moreover with elegant etchings, deſigned either as *hieroglyphical* explanations of the ſubject, or as *practical puns* on the name of the author?—And yet in truth ſo it is,—and on this ſubject I wiſh to give a word of advice to my countrymen.

Many of them have applied to me by letter, to aſſiſt them with deſigns for prefixing to their poems; and this I ſhould very willingly have done, had thoſe gentlemen been kind enough to ſubſcribe their real names to their requeſts: whereas, all that I have received have been ſigned, *Tom Long*, *Philoſophus*, *Philalethes*, and ſuch like. I have therefore been prevented from affording them the aſſiſtance I wiſhed; and cannot help wondering, that the gentlemen did not conſider, that it was impoſſible for me to provide *typical references* for feigned names; as, for ought I know, the perſon who ſigns himſelf *Tom Long* may not be four feet high; *Philoſophus* may be poſſeſſed of a conſiderable ſhare of folly; and *Philalethes* may be as arrant a liar as any in the kingdom.

It

It may not however be uſeleſs to offer ſome general reflections for all who may require them. It is not improbable, that, as the ſubject of their poems is the *Reſtoration*, many of my fellow-citizens may chooſe to adorn their *title-pages* with the repreſentation of His Majeſty, Charles the Second, eſcaping the vigilance of his purſuers in the *Royal Oak*. There are ſome particularities generally obſervable in this picture, which I ſhall point out to them, leſt they fall into ſimilar errors. Though I am as far as any other Briton can be, from wiſhing to "curtail" his Majeſty's Wig "of its fair proportion;" yet I have ſometimes been apt to think it rather improper, to make the Wig, as is uſually done, of larger dimenſions than the tree in which it and his Majeſty are concealed. It is a rule in Logic, and I believe may hold good in moſt other Sciences, that "*omne majus continet in ſe minus*," that "every thing larger can hold any thing that is leſs;" but I own, I never heard the contrary advanced or defended with any plauſible arguments, viz. "that every little thing can hold one larger." I therefore humbly propoſe, that there ſhould be at leaſt an edge of foliage round the outſkirts of the ſaid wig; and that its curls ſhould not exceed in number the leaves of the tree.

tree. There is alſo another practice almoſt equally prevalent, of which I am ſceptic enough to doubt the propriety. I own, I cannot think it by any means conducive to the more effectual concealment of his Majeſty, that there ſhould be three Regal Crowns ſtuck on three different branches of the tree. Horace ſays indeed,

——————*Pictoribus atque Poetis,*
Quidlibet audendi ſemper fuit æqua poteſtas.
Painters and Poets our indulgence claim,
Their daring equal, and their art the ſame.—FRAN.

And this may be reckoned a very allowable *poetical licence*; inaſmuch as it lets the ſpectator into the ſecret, *who is in the tree.* But it is apt to make him at the ſame time throw the accuſation of negligence and want of penetration on the three dragoons, who are uſually depicted on the foreground, cantering along very compoſedly, with ſerene countenances, erect perſons, and drawn ſwords, very little longer than themſelves.

THE MICROCOSM.

No. XIII.—MONDAY, *February* 19, 1787.

Quanto ferocius ante ſe egerint, tanto cupidius inſolitas voluptates hauſiſſe.—TAC.

Their appetite for unuſual pleaſure, was in proportion to their former ferocity.

THERE are many ideas, which, as I have hinted in a former paper, we are apt, merely on poetical authority, to adopt as data, and to ſubſtitute the pleaſing, but extravagant exuberance of a luxuriant fancy, for the convincing ſolidity of Hiſtorical demonſtration. Among theſe, none perhaps recurs more frequently to our imagination, or ſtrikes it more forcibly, than the primæval innocence of man. We inwardly reproach ourſelves with degeneracy; and are chagrined, when, after having con-

contemplated the beauties of ſo highly finiſhed a picture, we caſt our eyes on an imperfect ſketch which ſuffers ſo much by the compariſon.

A ſtate of nature, however, when diveſted of its poetical ornaments, will be found to be by no means a ſtate of innocence; and we ſhall perceive, upon a more accurate inſpection, that civilization, far from being prejudicial to the virtues of mankind, is in reality that fine poliſh which diſplays his exalted endowments to advantage; and effects the grand diſtinction between brute and human nature. The ſoul of man is ſo intimately blended with his paſſions, that Apathy is almoſt non-exiſtence; and even in the moſt ſluggiſh and inſenſible, we diſcover ſome ruling appetite, ſome main ſpring, which ſeems to actuate the few ideas of his liſtleſs vacancy. To reduce theſe therefore from our tyrants to our aſſiſtants, and to convert to the purpoſes of an agreeable variety, what was originally the cauſe of a flagitious fameneſs in our actions, is ſurely beneficial to the community. The vices of Nature are concentrated, but violent; thoſe of Civilization diffuſe, but gentle. According therefore to the eſtabliſhed political maxim, *Divide and conquer*, thoſe of the latter being

ing individually leſs powerful, are more eaſily ſubdued. To this it may be objected, that if the vices of the natural man are more violent, his virtues are at leaſt of a ſuperior nature; that obſequious inſincerity is but a bad ſubſtitute for diſintereſted honeſty; and that where courage and friendſhip are exchanged for policy and civility, however it may advance the abilities of mankind, it argues that their hearts are proportionably corrupted.

Specious as the names of theſe virtues are, that boaſted honeſty while it extended its influence to the immediate circle in which it moved, narrowed the heart againſt a general intercourſe with mankind, and precluded the idea of philanthropic benevolence; on the contrary, a general attention to the duties of Society, while like the ſun it diffuſes its light and heat, loſes nothing of its central fire. Courage, when reſtricted by laws, is a deſirable attribute; but when it becomes its own legiſlator, is too much the child of chance to be depended upon as the arbiter of the happineſs or miſery of mankind.

Civilized

Civilized Policy is by no means ſo infernal an agent to ambition as it has been generally repreſented. The time is at length arrived in the more enlightened parts of Europe, when the ſtateſman has ceaſed to adopt the dagger and the bowl, as neceſſary pieces of furniture in his cabinet; and in the preſent age, the School of Machiaval is not conſidered as the only road to greatneſs: ſo far has the refined ſpirit of the times contributed to humanize even the love of power.

Having thus endeavoured to prove, that a cloſer union of the bonds of Society is by no means derogatory to the dignity, or even prejudicial to the intereſts of mankind; my next endeavour ſhall be to inveſtigate, what in all ages has been the moſt effectual method of reducing barbarous ferocity; of ſoftening the vices of human nature into foibles; and of refining its good qualities into virtues. And no principle we may obſerve has been more conducive to theſe effects than the love of pleaſure. We may exemplify this by the authority of the moſt conſummate politicians; the revolutions of the moſt powerful empires;

empires; and the * errors of the moſt experienced commanders, the world ever produced. Cæſar, in accounting for the ſuperior ferocity of the Germans to the Gauls, mentions, as the principal cauſe, the effeminacy which a frequent intercourſe with merchants had introduced among the latter; but which, among the former, was hitherto but little known. Nay, ſo adapted to the ſupport of this idea are the words of Tacitus, in relating Agricola's method of reducing the ſavage independence of the Britons, that I will treſpaſs on the Reader's patience by tranſcribing them.

Ut homines diſperſi et rudes, eoque bello faciles, quieti et otio per voluptates aſſueſcerent; hortari privatim, adjuvare publicè, ut templa, fora, domus exſtruerent, laudando promptos, et caſtigando ſegnes. Jam vero principum filios liberalibus artibus erudire. Inde etiam habitûs noſtri honor, et frequens toga. Paulatimque diſceſſum ad delinimenta vitiorum, porticus, et balnea, et conviviorum elegantiam. Idque apud

* This poſition may ſeem a little extraordinary, but as the oppoſite events tend chiefly to the aggrandizement of individuals, it is to ſubſequent effects we are to look for the ſalutiferous or deſtructive tendency of theſe.

apud imperitos humanitas vocabatur, tum pars servitutis esset.

"That this nation, disperſed and uncultivated, "and on that account more prone to war, might, "by indulgencies become more accuſtomed to "eaſe and quiet, he began privately to encourage, "and publickly to aſſiſt them in building temples, "courts of judicature, and habitations; by com- "mending the ready and chaſtiſing the idle; and "at the ſame time, to inſtruct the ſons of their "chieftains in the liberal arts. From hence aroſe "their reſpect for us, and their frequent aſſump- "tion of the Roman Habit; ſo that by degrees "they were brought over to the allurements of "luxury, Porticos and Baths, and elegant enter- "tainments; their ignorance giving the name of "refinement, to what was in reality to conduce to "their ſlavery."

A convincing proof, that this politic meaſure was approved of by this great pattern of provincial government; a meaſure, which, when we reflect on its ſalutary conſequences, naturally brings to our mind the oppoſite conduct of the firſt invaders of America, whoſe progreſs was marked with

with ſuch carnage, merely perhaps from their ig-
[illegible]ce or neglect of this founded principle.

To proceed however in illuſtrating what I have advanced, and to prove that the love of pleaſure has often been inſtrumental to ſubverting the conſtitution of empires founded on Military law, by lulling to ſleep this ferocious inſolence where it was a conſtituent part of the government; I need only recur to the well known inſtances of Sparta and Rome. The decline of the former, may, with great reaſon be dated from the abrogation of thoſe wiſe ſumptuary laws inſtituted by the political penetration of Lycurgus. That celebrated Legiſlator, from having long ſtudied the genius of his countrymen, judged, that a military government was moſt peculiarly adapted to it; and that the very principle of refinement, which, from their innate pride ſupported the Athenians, would tend to enervate the haughty ſeverity of the Spartans; and ſubvert that warlike diſpoſition by which alone they exiſted as a commonwealth. The alteration produced in the manners, and ſhortly after in the government of the latter, from ſimilar cauſes, (a period of about one hundred and thirty

years

years having elapſed from the introduction of the Corinthian and Syracuſan luxuries, to the perpetual dictatorſhip of Sylla,) is too well known to need diſcuſſion here. Suffice it to ſay, that during this interval, and even after the ſubverſion of the Commonwealth, the great and elegant geniuſes, who from the introduction of the liberal arts, were enabled to add cultivation to a rich and luxuriant ſoil, have ſo far obſcured the rugged and unformed virtues of their predeceſſors, that though the mind may reſt with a momentary ſatisfaction on a Cincinnatus or a Fabricius, it is to the refined voluptuouſneſs of a Lucullus, the unbounded ſoul of a Cæſar, and the inexhauſted genius of a Cicero, that we look for the character of this extraordinary people.

Laſtly, to exemplify this idea in the defeats or diſſolution of the moſt powerful and veteran armies, which have entirely originated in a deviation from the ſimple abſtinence neceſſary to their unity, let us take a ſhort review of the conduct of Hannibal, from his entrance into Italy, to the defection of Capua. This aſtoniſhing commander, having through the moſt barbarous countries in the

the midſt of the united attacks of war, famine, and tempeſt, cemented the jarring intereſts of an army made up of the flower of ſome nations, and the ſcum of others; having perſonally ſurmounted the moſt incredible difficulties, and in all his enterprizes united the characters of ſoldier and general; having gained four deciſive victories over the Romans in the very heart of Italy; neither himſelf nor his army could reſiſt the ſoft climate and luxurious effeminacy of Campania, "*Adeo ut vere dictum ſit*," ſays Florus, "*Capuam Hannibali Cannas fuiſſe.*" "*So that it was with juſtice ſaid, that Capua was Hannibal's Cannæ.*" I might farther enforce this maxim, by Cæſar's deſcription of the ſtate of Pompey's camp, when he accounts for his victory in Theſſaly; and afterwards by the effect of Egyptian Luxury on the veteran legions of Antony; were I not haſtening to a period, with which, as I preſume, ſome of my fellow-Citizens are unwillingly familiar, I purpoſe concluding this *winter's tale.*

The ſudden alteration in the genius of the Engliſh on the Reſtoration, an Epocha which has now a double hold on immortal celebrity, from the

the aſſiſtance of Hiſtory and Poetry, has been to ſome a matter of ſurpriſe; and the immediate tranſition from the cold ſuſpicious policy of Cromwell, and the fanatic hypocriſy of the Common-Wealth, to the general ſpirit of diſſipation, and the ſudden revival of ſprightly wit, and genius in all its levity, which characterized the reign of Charles, has been conſidered as a ſtriking inſtance of ficklenefs in the human underſtanding.

But it was probably this principle, ſo inherent in our natures, which gave riſe to ſo general a variation. The mind of man, after having been harraſſed by the uſurpation of the more violent paſſions, ſeizes with avidity, the firſt object which offers itſelf, as a relaxation from care, and a gratification of the unſatisfied appetites. This was, at the acceſſion of Charles, the ſtate of England; at one time diſtracted by internal diſcord, at another enſlaved by its pretended deliverer, it eaſily concurred with the more voluptuous diſpoſition of its new maſter, in exchanging Political, for Poetical ribaldry; and converting the intrigues of the Cabinet, into thoſe of the Chamber. In the one caſe, the angry collision of two thunder

thunder clouds, ſtruck forth mutual flaſhes, whoſe progreſs was only known by the ſubſequent deſtruction; in the other, the returning Sun, doubly prolific after the ſtorm, nurtured thoſe flowers of wit and genius, which form no inconſiderable figure in the Annals of Engliſh literature.

The ſame effects from the ſame cauſes may be obſerved to have taken place in the latter years of William's reign, and more particularly during that of Queen Anne, (deſervedly eſteemed the Auguſtan age of Great-Britain;) and from that period, though perhaps the ſame day has not ſeen the united excellencies of ſo many diſtinguiſhed men, our viſible refinements on Luxury will be ſufficient evidence of our progreſs in civilization. Innumerable are the conveniencies, nay, ſuperfluities of life in this opulent kingdom, which in the beginning of this Century were totally unknown; and which, though they may feed Cynical ſpleen, or offend the ſeverity of a Stoic, if they tend to add one more link to the chain of ſociety, to awaken one more liberal emotion in the heart, or to humanize, into a citizen of the world, one more

more malecontent, (as from their tendency we have evident reaſon to ſuppoſe they do,) the temporal evil is by no means equivalent to the reſting good; and the man who advances civilization to its higheſt poliſh, is the moſt beneficial member of the community.

C

NOTES to CORRESPONDENTS.

I cannot comply with the requeſt of NUMA, as it would be highly preſumptuous in me to engage in any religious controverſy.---ALFRED ſhall be attended to,--but may depend upon proper enquiry being made at the Herald's Office, with regard to the performance of his promiſe. --CHRISTOPHER CUTJOKE ſhall appear.

THE MICROCOSM.

No. XIV.—MONDAY, *February* 26, 1787.

Locus eſt et pluribus umbris.—HOR.
Still I have room.———FRANCIS.

ACCORDING to my promiſe made in a former paper, I ſhall dedicate this to the favors of correſpondents. They will ſee that I have been careful to abridge nothing, but what was neceſſary to reduce their letters to a more convenient ſize.

'TO THE MICROCOSMOPOLITAN.

'SIR,

'An ingenious paper of your's, containing ſome acute and juſt obſervations on Epitaphs, induced me to offer for your inſpection the following remarks on that ſubject.

'We need no other witneſs than our own con-
'ſcience, to convict us of that inordinate love of
'Fame, ſo predominant in all orders and ranks of
'men. If then in the prime of life, this paſſion
'prevails over every other conſideration, and out-
'balances all objections thrown into the oppoſite
'ſcale by virtue or religion; if thoſe moraliſts are
'to be credited, who contend, not without ſome
'ſhadow of reaſon, that the paſſions operate on
'the human mind in a greater degree, as we draw
'nearer to our end; this, above all others, muſt
'conſequently have greater influence at that awful
'period; ſince its ſole aim is to be the topic of
'praiſe and admiration to its own and ſucceeding
'generations. Why do the "ſhort and ſimple
"annals of the poor," in the Country-Church-
'Yard, court the tribute of a tear from the ſym-
'pathetic traveller? Why do we behold with
'wonder and aſtoniſhment, the monumental re-
'cords of the rich and noble in that vaſt pile of
'antiquity, where the Princes and Prelates, the
'Heroes and Poets of this land, lie mouldering
'to gether? For the ſame reaſon;—that deſire of
'being diſtinguiſhed, even after death, from the
'common herd of mortals, formed of the ſame
'periſhable materials as ourſelves. The unlettered

'ruſtic

'ruſtic exults as much in his ill ſhaped rhimes,
'which afford matter of converſation to the hum-
'ble tenants of his native Hamlet, as the trophied
'General in the ſuperb folly of a ſtupendous Mau-
'ſoleum; both feel a proportionable degree of
'happineſs, if they die with the hopes that their
'name ſhall eſcape the canker-worm of oblivion.

'In the gradual riſe therefore and progreſs of
'different ſtates, we may obſerve with what
'judgement the legiſlators ſelected this paſſion, as
'the hinge on which many of their principal laws
'ſeem to turn; no incentive to virtue was found
'ſo efficacious, as inſcribing the actions of the
'dead on their monuments: thus inciting future
'heroes to ſimilar exertions, by holding up to
'their eyes the laurels of their anceſtors.

'The Lacedemonians indeed thoroughly un-
'derſtood the force and policy of this laſt tribute
'to the memory of the dead, and enacted a law,
'prohibiting all in their realm from making
'Epitaphs on any perſons except thoſe who had
'ſurrendered up their lives for the ſervice of their
'country; and in what did the bulwark and glory
'of Sparta conſiſt? In military valour! which ſhe

'endeavoured to ſtrengthen by a reward the moſt 'endearing and grateful to the ſoul of man; a cer-'tainty that his fame ſhould ſurvive the frailty of 'human nature.

'When therefore we reflect on their utility, we 'cannot but lament the pauſity of good Epitaphs; 'tho' it is indeed a kind of writing ſo generally 'cultivated in all nations, that certainly there 'muſt be *ſome* in every country which redound as 'well to the honor of the author, as to the glory 'of thoſe whom they immortalize. I wave men-'tioning many in our own language, which, tho' 'excellent, are obvious to every one; but cannot 'help claiming your attention to one not ſo gene-'rally known, and at the ſame time remarkable 'for its elegance and ſimplicity. Drayton was a 'Poet, who lived in the ſixteenth century.

'*Doe, pious marble, let thy readers know,*
'*What they and what their children owe*
'*To Drayton's name, whoſe ſacred duſt*
'*Wee recommend unto thy truſt;*
'*Protect his memory and preſerve his Story,*
'*Remain a laſting monument of his Glory,*

'*And*

'And when thy ruines ſhall diſclame
'To be the Treas'rer of his name,
'His name, which cannot fade, ſhall be
'An everlaſting monument to thee.

'How different are the Epitaph-writers of 'theſe days, when every tomb-ſtone bears the 'ſtrongeſt contradiction to truth and reaſon. To 'be aſſured of this, only take a ſurvey of the bu- 'rial places within the bills of mortality, and at 'the ſame time a retroſpect of the lives of thoſe, 'whoſe bones are adorned with this miſerable and 'faithleſs deſcant on their virtues; and you will 'find every day ſome freſh proof, how frequently

——"*Some kind friend ſupplies,*
"*Hic jacet, and a hundred lies,*"

'The notoriety indeed of their miſuſe is ſo fla- 'grant among the French, that "*Menteur comme* "*un Epitaph,*" paſſes for a proverb with them. 'But not to detain you any longer on this ſubject, 'I ſhall preſent you with the following, as a ſpe- 'cimen of honeſty and integrity in an Epitaph 'rarely to be found. It is written on an ampbi- 'bious animal, vulgarly called a Marine; and I 'ſuſpect it to be the production of ſome true-

'hearted Tar, both from the originality and pe-
'culiar bluntneſs of the compoſition, but I leave
'that to the deciſion of the learned.

'*Here lies retired from buſy ſcenes,*
'*A firſt Lieutenant of Marines,*
'*Who lately lived in health and plenty,*
'*On board the good ſhip, Diligente,*
'*Now ſtripp'd of all his warlike ſhew,*
'*And laid in box of elm below,*
'*Confind to earth in narrow borders,*
'*He riſes not till further orders.*

'But to return to my ſubject, and to apply it
'more particularly to thoſe for whom it was in-
'tended, will prove on trial a more difficult and
'important matter, than at firſt it appeared to be.
'For there are certain followers of Democritus,
'who maintain, that *every thing ſerious is ridi-*
'*culous.* Paradoxical as this doctrine ſeems, there
'are not wanting thoſe, even in our *leſſer world*,
'who laugh reflection out of countenance, merely
'becauſe it comes not within the ſphere of their
'comprehenſion. But I ſhall conſider myſelf as
'addreſſing thoſe who are unhackneyed in the
'ways of this ſect; the lovers of contemplation,
'and you, who have exhibited by your weekly lu-
'cubrations

'cubrations a fondneſs and attachment to litera-
'ture, highly meritorious, and leave them to en-
'joy their laugh, tho' at my expence.

'Are the young and inexperienced to admire an
'Epitaph on a diſtinguiſhed and noble character,
'for the elegance and perſpicuity of the ſtyle; for
'the harmony of the periods alone? Does the en-
'tombed glory of Chatham ſuggeſt to the con-
'templative mind no other ideas than thoſe, which
'are fleet and tranſient as the morning dew before
'the Sun? No, "*E'en from the Tomb the voice*
"*of Nature cries,*" while we contemplate with
'regret the loſs of a great and noble hero, "*Go*
"*and do thou likewiſe.*"

'CÆMETERIUS.'

I cannot better comply with the requeſt of the young Lady to whom I am indebted for the following letter, than by publiſhing her caſe in her own words.

'To GREGORY GRIFFIN, ESQ.

'DEAR SIR,

'YOU, who are ſcarcely
'entered into life, yet know ſo well how to judge

'of its proprieties, will take up with ſpirit, I flat-
'ter myſelf, the ſubject which I propoſe recom-
'mending to your obſervation. And as you are
'in a great meaſure the Guardian of a world,
'whoſe inhabitants will one day largely con-
'tribute to fill up the various circles of higher life,
'any hints from a pen ſo peculiarly intereſting as
'yours, muſt deeply impreſs their minds with the
'conviction of thoſe truths you wiſh to inculcate.

'My caſe will perhaps ſeem at firſt ſight un-
'worthy of ſerious conſideration; but it has been
'very truly obſerved, by many very wiſe men,
'that there are trivial mortifications, which, be-
'ing conſidered by the world as too inſignificant
'for their pity, are, more particularly perhaps on
'that account, equally painful to the ſufferer with
'the moſt ſerious misfortunes.

'The circumſtances which I at preſent allude
'to, are the loud whiſpers, the half-ſuppreſſed
'fits of laughter, and thoſe other nameleſs rude-
'neſſes, which are not ſo pointed as to bring a
'*Jemmy Fellow* into danger of a ſerious reprimand;
'but are generally *too* well underſtood by the vic-
'tim of their raillery, and are very long and ſe-
'verely

'verely felt.—Perhaps I ſhall better elucidate my 'meaning by a candid recital of the particular af-'fair which induced me to write to you, of which 'you will make what uſe you pleaſe; and grant 'generous allowances to the firſt female correſ-'pondent who claims your countenance and 'ſupport.

'I have been educated very far from the gay 'and faſhionable world; and my heart now pal-'pitates at the recollection of what I felt, when 'on the morning of my eighteenth year my father 'offered me a journey to London. I accepted it 'with tranſport, and I have actually been in Town 'now a whole fortnight. It would be dull and 'unintereſting to give you an account of all the 'raptures I have felt at the variety of ſcenes, 'which have the powerful charm of novelty, 'added to all that is pleaſing, to recommend them.

'An invitation to a ball awaited my arrival; 'and great was the metamorphoſis made in my 'appearance, to qualify me for the very beſt com-'pany. After a laſt look of approbation at my 'glaſs, I had ſcarcely courage to encounter my 'father's eye with a ſight ſo new to him. I heſi-'tated as I entered the room; he ſurveyed me

'with a look of mingled affection and ſurprize; 'my huge muff fell from my hand, and appeared 'to me at that moment more formidable than 'the animal could have done to whom it origi- 'nally belonged. By an approving ſmile, how- 'ever from my father, the muff was re-inſtated 'in my favour; the *whim* of my cap was changed 'into *taſte*; the feathers drooped more gracefully 'than ever; and I adjuſted my handkerchief in 'perfect good humour with its enlarged and ex- 'tended ſize.—Thus ſelf-complacent, my mind 'was left at eaſe to dwell upon the delightful ex- 'pectations I had formed from the ball. My 'watch ſurely beat more tedious hours than when 'I was in the Country. The moment however at 'laſt arrived. I entered the room full of a thou- 'ſand pleaſing chimeras; and, as I felt a warm 'animated glow of partiality for every body I 'ſaw, I never once conceived but they all felt a 'reciprocal lively prepoſſeſſion in my favor.

'While the lady of the houſe was introducing 'me to the circle of her friends, and my heart 'was exulting with joy not to be deſcribed, a 'ſmart well-dreſſed beau tripped up to a lady near 'me, and ſignificantly repeated, in a loud whiſper,

'So

" *So ſtiff, ſo mute, ſome ſtatue you would ſwear,*
" *Step'd from its pedeſtal to take the air.*"

'I turned ſuddenly round and caught his eye, 'a titter followed,—and in one moment I was 'humbled to the duſt. Judge of my ſenſations; 'confuſed, mortified, and all my hopes of pleaſing 'flown. In vain I endeavoured to recover my 'chearfulneſs; my partner was pleaſing and at-'tentive; but the frightful figure, who had thus 'put me out of humour with myſelf, came ſo of-'ten near me in the dance, and his odious rhime 'ſo jingled in my ears, that it was to no purpoſe 'I reaſoned againſt thoſe feelings, which the 'conſciouſneſs of guilt itſelf could hardly have 'encreaſed.

'Pray tell me, my dear Sir, where do people de-'rive the right to trifle with the eaſe and comfort 'of others? The advantages of fortune and edu-'cation, which this gentleman, I find, may boaſt 'of, were no advantages to me. They might 'have been extremely pleaſing, had they induced 'him to behave with common propriety to a per-'ſon (ſaid to be handſome,) certainly *young*, and 'a *ſtranger*, and who could not therefore poſſibly 'have offended him.

'As

'As *good breeding* is founded on *good ſenſe*, and 'clearly meant to prevent uneaſy feelings, ſhould 'there not be ſome badge worn by theſe Gen-'tlemen who defy laws it is ſo much to the in-'tereſt of ſociety to ſevere, that we may know 'how to eſcape their inſults? I will not ſay that 'a Highwayman would *frighten* me leſs with a 'piſtol pointed at my breaſt; but I am certain I 'could forgive him ſooner: The one is an open 'attack, from which, if you *can*, you *may* defend 'yourſelf; in the other caſe there is no tempta-'tion, but from the hope of giving pain, and 'witneſſing the cruel effects of it;—a pleaſure 'which I do not recollect that *Milton* has aſcribed 'to his fallen Angels.

'Let me hope then, that you, Sir, will beſtow 'ſome ſalutary admonitions on perſons of this de-'ſcription; and will take the trouble to inform 'them, that the behaviour, of which I complain, 'is utterly unworthy of a Gentleman; of a man 'of honour, courage, and benevolence.

'I am, dear Sir, with the greateſt reſpect,

'Your humble Servant,

'A mortified

'COUNTRY GIRL.'

That

That I may as much as poſſible fulfil the deſire of my fair Correſpondent, I ſhall ſubjoin, for the information and edification of all whom it may concern of the great and little world, the following Reſolutions, paſſed in a COMMITTEE appointed for the purpoſe of inveſtigating all manners, cuſtoms, and behaviour of *Children*, of what kind or denomination ſoever.

GREGORY GRIFFIN, Eſq in the Chair.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY,

I. That the being able to ſay by heart two or more lines of *Pope*, or any other Poet or author whatſoever, does not conſtitute a *pretty fellow*, a wit, or a ſatiriſt.

II. That it is the opinion of this Committee, that wilfully and maliciouſly to inſult the feelings of an inoffenſive and unprotected female, is, in the extreme, mean, cowardly, and ungenerous.

Mr. GRIFFIN then leaving the chair, it was

RESOLVED,

That the thanks of this meeting be given to the Chairman, for his active, candid, and impartial conduct.

Mr.

Mr. GRIFFIN then reſumed the Chair, and it was

RESOLVED,

I. That this Committee do continue to ſit on every buſineſs, complaint, or application, of what kind ſoever that is laid before the MICROCOSMOPOLITAN; and ſtrictly and impartially do examine, inveſtigate, and determine on the ſame.

II. That the Reſolutions of this COMMITTEE be printed in the Microcoſm.

Signed by the Chairman.

GREGORY GRIFFIN, Chairman.

THE MICROCOSM.

No. XV.—MONDAY, *March* 5, 1787.

Diſcordia ſemina rerum.——OVID.

Diſcordant matter.

THE firſt of the following letters I inſert, as well on account of its intrinſic merit, as becauſe it contains a requeſt, with which I think it my duty to comply; and its own appearance will be not a little ſerviceable towards promoting the wiſh of its Author.—The ſecond claims my attention, as it practically illuſtrates, in a manner very ſtriking, a propoſition I have before laid down, namely, the ill effects ariſing from intemperate joking.

To

'To GREGORY GRIFFIN, Esq.

'*London, Februar* 1787.

'SIR,

'AS the motive which has in-
'duced you to undertake your justly-admired
'Work, seems chiefly the good of your fellow-ci-
'tizens; and as the plan upon which you profess
'to conduct it, is so truly liberal, I am assured
'that a hint from whatever quarter, will not fail
'to meet with a favorable reception.—Your il-
'lustrious predecessors, the *Spectator*, *Rambler*, &c.
'&c. were so famous for their candid and disinter-
'ested conduct in this particular, that they were
'not afraid of displaying the faults which their
'correspondents pointed out; a circumstance
'which, (with the wise and discerning) must have
'contributed not a little to advance their repu-
'tation.—But it is not faults, Sir, upon which I
'would descant; I declare to you at present I
'have not perceived any which are material; and
'I am not one of those cavilling critics who are
'eager to

"*Catch the straws which swim at top,*
"*And leave the pearls behind.*"

'My

'My preſent intention is merely to take the liberty of pointing out to you a ſubject which I 'ſhould be happy to ſee diſcuſſed in one of your 'papers; a ſubject which I think as likely to be 'beneficial to your contemporaries in their future 'progreſs through life, as moſt which could be 'propoſed.—It is, Sir, to point out to them, the 'very eſſential difference which ſubſiſts between 'true and falſe greatneſs.

'There are ſome of them whoſe unhappy pro-'penſity to indolence and futility, you have hu-'morouſly deſcribed; but there are doubtleſs 'others, who have a laudable ambition to diſtin-'guiſh themſelves, and who (to make them valu-'able as well as conſpicuous members of ſociety) 'want only ſome friendly hand to point out the 'proper goal to which their race ſhould be 'directed.

'Of all the powers of the human mind, the 'judgement ſeems to be that which arrives the 'lateſt at perfection: the reaſon is obvious; to 'compare and decide, requires a degree of calm-'neſs and perſpicuity, almoſt incompatible with 'the fire and enthuſiaſm of youth.

'Without

'Without ſome aſſiſtance, therefore, my good 'Sir, how are they likely to diſcriminate between 'what is really, or only apparently great; will 'not the glare of the one be preferred to the ſteady 'brightneſs of the other? will not partial excel-'lence delude their imagination? and when the 'admirable and the eſtimable come in competi-'tion, will they not be apt to ſeize the former 'with eagerneſs, and reject the latter with con-'tempt?

'The cold cautions of age and experience deli-'vered upon theſe occaſions, are generally derided, 'or at beſt heared with indifference; but this can-'not be the caſe, Sir, when they come from you. '—Your fellow-citizens will ſurely liſten with 'attention to one, who has reflected ſo much 'honour upon their ſociety; and will receive with 'confidence the precepts of one, who convinces 'them by his conduct that he not only knows, 'but practiſes what is truly meritorious.

'Haſten then, my good Sir, to inſtruct them in 'what real greatneſs conſiſts. Should you ſuc-'ceed, the riſing generation will have cauſe to 'bleſs you! the name of the MICROCOSMO-

POLITAN

'POLITAN will be mentioned with admiration 'and reverence to all futurity; and as for myſelf, 'I proteſt to you, my family Creſt ſhall be imme- 'diately eraſed, and a Griffin ſubſtituted in its 'room.

'I am, Sir, with the trueſt reſpect,

'Your conſtant reader,

'And admirer,

'ALFRED.'

'SIR,

'AS the poor wretch who is 'about to ſuffer the laſt penalty of the law, points 'out to his fellow creatures the errors which have 'cauſed his ruin, and, at the ſame time patheti- 'cally warns them by his unhappy fate; ſo I, 'with like conviction of miſconduct, am ſoli- 'citous to repreſent to the world my own inadver- 'tencies; and by my example, to caution others 'againſt committing faults ſimilar to thoſe which 'have proved my ruin.

'You muſt know, Mr. Griffin, that in my 'younger days I was exceedingly ambitious of

'being

'being diſtinguiſhed as a jeſter. There was no 'other conſideration with me in life but what I 'would willingly ſacrifice to this. When at Eton, 'I was remarked for being much better ac-'quainted with *Joe Miller* and *Tom Brown*, than 'any of the Greek or Roman Claſſics. My pro-'feſſion was the Law, but I could not endure its 'drudgery; and therefore inſtead of *ſapping* at the 'ſtatutes at large in my chambers, or *ſporting* 'Cicero at the bar, I employed my time in ſcrib-'bling Bon-mots for the newſpapers, and fre-'quenting the ſociety of *young fellows* of wit and 'pleaſure. The clubs, of which I was a mem-'ber, declared me a phenomenon of wit. I was 'pleaſed with this diſtinction; and knowing that 'my company in general conſiſted of men who 'had little to boaſt of but their facetiouſneſs, I 'frequently paid for them their tavern reckonings, 'that I might enjoy the livelineſs of their conver-'ſation; and purchaſed my participation of their 'feſtivity, at a price little ſuitable to the contracted 'ſtate of my finances.

'I had once the happineſs of poſſeſſing a very 'valuable friend. He was an exceedingly honeſt 'man, firmly attached to me, and capable as well

'as

'as willing to do me many ſervices; but unfortu-
'nately, he was not remarkable for any great
'quality of penetration; and beſides this he had
'a natural imperfection in his ſpeech. Happening
'one day to be reckoning up with him a liſt of
'famous Orators, and humoroſly putting his
'name among the number, he fell into a violent
'rage, inſiſted that I inſulted him, and pulled me
'by the noſe. I pitying his want of ſagacity in
'not diſcovering that all I intended was a joke,
'and at the ſame time reflecting that fighting was
'no part of the buſineſs of a man of wit, very
'calmly pocketed the affront, and left him. Thus
'terminated our intercourſe of friendſhip.

'Some years ago I paid my addreſſes to a young
'lady, celebrated for her great beauty, fortune,
'and mental endowments. I had every reaſon to
'felicitate myſelf on the proſpect of being hap-
'pily united to her; 'till chancing one evening to
'cut a joke on the ſeventh commandment, in the
'preſence of herſelf and father, I was immedi-
'ately frowned at by the lady, rebuked by the old
'gentleman, and ſoon after forbid the preſence of
'the one, and the dwelling of the other.

'In

'In the early part of my life, I was regarded by 'an old rich uncle of mine, who had a pretty 'young houſekeeper, as his heir. But as my evil 'ſtars would have it, being once on a viſit to him, 'and unthinkingly telling him a ſtory of a ridi-'culous old dotard, and a briſk young damſel, he 'took the application to himſelf, called me an im-'pertinent fellow, and diſcarded me.

'Many other misfortunes, Mr. Griffin, have at-'tended this unlucky diſpoſition of mine. They 'have had indeed, at laſt this good effect on me; 'they have brought me to my ſenſes; and I be-'gin to ſee, that had I poſſeſſed only wit enough 'to diſcover I was a fool, I ſhould have acted very 'differently in theſe caſes, and have been now a 'happy man.

'I am, Sir, yours, &c.

'CHRISTOPHER CUTJOKE.

For the inſertion of the following letter I ſhall make no apology, but its own merit, and leave it to ſpeak for itſelf.

'To

'To GREGORY GRIFFIN, ESQ.

'DEAR SIR,

'AS the profeſſed intention 'of your admirable work, is to treat of the foibles 'and follies of mankind in general, and our little 'world in particular, I preſume, that (however 'other purſuits may have induced you to depart 'from your original plan) the following unfi-'niſhed lines, on a ſubject which you have not yet 'taken in hand, will not be totally unacceptable.

'I ſhall omit troubling you with the hackneyed 'apology of "an unfledged muſe," however 'a propos it may be to the preſent caſe. This 'however I may be allowed to ſay, that they 'were written careleſsly and in a hurry; and may 'poſſibly ſtand in need of much correction and de-'falcation. If however on any future occaſion 'they ſhall be deemed worthy of a place in your 'paper, it will be the higheſt honour that can be 'aſpired to, by, your conſtant reader and admirer,

'IRONICULUS.

'ARS

'ARS MENTIENDI;
'OR,
'The ART of LYING.

'When ſordid man by juſtice unreſtrain'd
'Rang'd the wild woods, and food by plunder
'gain'd;
'Yet unenlighten'd by mild reaſon's ray,
'Coarſe nature rul'd with undiſputed ſway.
'But when ſome ſage's great aſpiring mind,
'By bonds of mutual intereſt link'd mankind,
'Then Art reſtrain'd her ſiſter's wide domain,
'And claim'd with nature, a divided reign.
'Yet ſtill diſtruſtful of her own ſucceſs,
'She ſought to pleaſe by wearing nature's dreſs.
'So *that* great art, whoſe principles and uſe,
'Employ the pen of my unworthy muſe,
'Tho' great itſelf, in theſe degenerate days
'Is forced to ſhine with adſcititious rays,
'Nor ever can a laſting ſceptre wield,
'Unleſs in robes of pureſt truth conceal'd.
'Hear then whoe'er the arduous taſk will try,
'Who wiſh with ſenſe, with ſkill, with taſte to *lye*;
'Ye patriots plotting miniſters diſgrace,
'Ye miniſters who fear——a loſs of place;
'Ye tradeſmen, who with writs the ſop entrap,
'Ye ſops, who ſtrive thoſe tradeſmen to eſcape;

'Ye

'Ye reverend Jews, enrich'd by chriſtian ſpoil,
'Ye parſons, who for benefices toil;
'No longer hope by open war to win,
'Ceaſe, ceaſe, ye fools, to lye "*thro' thick and thin.*"
"But know this truth, enough for rogues to know,"
'Lyes ne'er can pleaſe the man who thinks them
'ſo.
'Would you by flattery ſeek the road to wealth?
'Puſh not too hard, but ſlide it in by ſtealth.
'Mark well your cully's temper and purſuit
'And fit to every leg the pliant boot.
'Tell not the ſpendthrift that he hoards with ſenſe,
'Tell not the miſer that he ſcorns expence.
'Nor praiſe the learning of a dunce profeſt,
'Nor ſwear a ſloven's elegantly dreſt.
'Thus, if by chance, in harmleſs ſport and play,
'You coolly talk a character away;
'Or boldly a flat perjurer appear,
'Nor gallows dread, nor lacerated ear,
'Still let your lyes to truth *near neighbours* be,
'And ſtill with probability agree.
'So ſhall you govern with unbounded reign,
'Nor longer cringe, and toil, and *lye* in vain;
While Truth laments her empire quite o'erthrown,
And by a form uſurp'd ſo like her *own*.'

THE

MICROCOSM.

No. XVI.—MONDAY, *March* 5, 1787.

Uſus
Quem penes arbitrium eſt et jus et norma loquendi.

Uſe is the judge, the law, and rule of ſpeech.

IT is a favourite amuſement with me, and one of which in the preſent paper I ſhall invite my readers to participate, to adopt a maxim eſtabliſhed in any ſingle inſtance, to trace its influence where it has operated undiſcovered; to examine the ſecret ſprings by which it has worked; and the cauſes which have contributed to their concealment. In the courſe of this purſuit, I may boaſt, that there is ſcarce one of theſe *miniatures* of experience and obſervation, from the moral maxims of Grecian Philoſophy,

to

to the prudential apothegms of *Poor Robin*, which has not been ſucceſſively the object of my obſervation and diſcuſſion. I am however aware, that in the opinion of their importance, I may perhaps be ſingular.

That "life is ſhort," that "the generality of "mankind are vicious," ſeem ideas that might have ſuggeſted themſelves to a mind undiſtinguiſhed for peculiar ſagacity, or an uncommon ſhare of experience.—But to carry further the former of theſe maxims, and to conſider that life is ſhort, when compared with the multiplicity of its buſineſs, and the variety of its purſuits; that it is too much ſo for the purpoſes of honor and ambition; that to draw a concluſion from the attempts of men, we ſhould imagine it longer; is an obſervation not ſo entirely unworthy of a philoſopher. And by purſuing the latter of theſe thoughts, though on the firſt view it may not appear the reſult of any extraordinary obſervation, it may be found on a narrower inſpection, to convey a ſtrong argument of the impropriety of popular government.

The ſcrap of Latin, which, in conformity to eſtabliſhed precedent, is prefixed to my paper, exhibits an example of the influence of Faſhion beyond thoſe limits, which are uſually aſſigned to its prerogative. For were we to accept the definition of it, the moſt uſually accepted, we ſhould conſider it only as the director of diverſion and dreſs; of unmeaning compliment, and unſocial intimacy. And however evidently miſtaken ſuch an opinion might appear, we muſt look for its ſource in one of the moſt prevailing principles of the human mind; a principle, (the exceſs of which we ſtigmatize by the name of Pedantry) of deducing the illuſtrations of every ſubject of enquiry from the more immediate objects of our own purſuits, and circumſcribing its bounds within the limits of our own obſervation. On the contrary, we ſhall find, that all our attempts to preſcribe bounds to the activity of this ſo powerful agent, will end only in ſurpriſe at the extent of its authority; in aſtoniſhment at the univerſality of its influence. Its claim to an undiſputed empire over language, is aſſerted by the author from whom I have taken the motto of this paper; with what juſtice, the teſtimony of a ſucceeding age may declare; when a Cæſar who made and unmade the laws

laws of the world at his pleaſure, found the ſmalleſt innovation in language beyond the utmoſt limits of arbitrary power. Nothing indeed but the higheſt vanity, nouriſhed by the groſſeſt adulation, an idea of the infinitude of ſovereign authority, and ſervile obedience, could have given birth to ſuch an attempt.

However paradoxical it may ſeem, that, in a matter of judgment and taſte, the vague arbitration of individuals ſhould be preferable to the abſolute deciſion of a learned body; yet the imbecillity ſo evident in the language of a neighbouring nation, and ſo undoubtedly the effect of eſtabliſhing ſuch a court of criticiſm, leaves us little reaſon to regret, that language with us, is ſo entirely the child of chance and cuſtom.—The firſt prize of Rhetorick given to a woman, was a bad omen to the future endeavours of the French Academy.

To omit the innumerable inconveniencies attending on every attempt to regulate language; to judge of the poſſible ſucceſs of ſuch an attempt, from the abſtracted probability alone, were to declare it impoſſible. A multitude of

circumſtances, equally unforeſeen and unavoidable, muſt concur to the formation of a language. An improvement, or corruption of manners; the reduction of a foreign enemy; or an invaſion from abroad, are circumſtances that ultimately, or immediately, tend to produce ſome change in the language of a people. And even of theſe, the moſt feeble agents have been found more efficacious, than the joint operations of power and policy.

The conqueſts of this nation on the continent, contributed more perhaps to the naturalization of the French language amongſt us, than the Norman invaſion, and its attendant conſequences, the neceſſity laid on every individual, to acquire the uſe of that tongue in which all caſes of property were to be determined; and the numberleſs diſadvantages and reſtrictions impoſed on the ſtudy of the native language.

At a time when meaſures ſo ſeemingly deciſive proved ineffectual, it may be curious to obſerve the agency of others, apparently foreign from any connection with the improvement or alteration of our language. The reſidence of our nobility

nobility in the conquered provinces of France, the continual wars maintained againſt that nation, making the ſtudy of their language an indiſpenſible qualification in all who aſpired to civil or military dignities, unavoidably brought on a change in our own. The accuſation therefore, of a learned Etymologiſt, againſt *Chaucer*, of introducing into our language "*integra verborum "plauſtra*," "*whole cartloads of words*," however elegant in expreſſion, is falſe in foundation. The language of *Chaucer's* poetry, is that of the court in which he lived; and that it was not, no probable concluſion can be drawn, from any difference of ſtyle in his authors, contemporaries. In thoſe who writ under the ſame advantages, no ſuch difference is obſervable; and thoſe, who were excluded from them, laboured under extreme diſadvantages, from the variations of vernacular language, and the diverſity of provincial dialect; which, as they have now in a great meaſure ceaſed to exiſt, may, together with their primary cauſes, furniſh a ſubject for curious enquiry.

It appears, from the concurrence of ſeveral ingenious antiquaries, as well as from the teſti-

mony of *Caxton*, in one of his prefaces, that the Engliſh language was, in his time, diverſified by innumerable provincial peculiarities. He mentions his own choice of the Kentiſh dialect, and the ſucceſs that attended it. The language of *Chaucer's* poetry is frequently more intelligible to a modern reader, than that of ſuch of his ſucceſſors, as employed themſelves on popular ſubjects. *Gawin Douglas*, a poetical tranſlator of *Virgil*, is now, owing to the uſe of a Northern dialect, though a near contemporary of *Spenſer's*, almoſt unintelligible.

After eſtabliſhing the exiſtence of a fact, the beaten track of tranſition will naturally lead us to a conſideration of its cauſes. Among the firſt effects produced by an extenſion of empire, may be reckoned a barbarous peculiarity of language, in the provinces the moſt remote from the ſeat of learning and refinement. *Livy* is ſaid to have had his *Patavinity*; and *Claudian* is accuſed of barbariſms, the conſequence of his education in a diſtant province. A difficulty of conveyance, a ſtagnation of commercial intercourſe, will produce the ſame effects with

with too wide an extenſion of empire; and are as an effectual a barrier againſt a mixture of Idioms and dialect, as in a more civilized ſtate, the utmoſt diſtance of ſituation between the moſt remote provinces.

To cauſes ſeemingly ſo unconnected with the ſituation of language, muſt we attribute the barbarity of our own, during ſo many centuries. And thoſe which contributed to its refinement, may, at firſt ſight, probably, ſeem equally foreign to that effect. No nation, perhaps, contributed leſs to the revival of literature, than our own; a circumſtance which in a great meaſure ſecured it from that torrent of pedantry which overwhelmed the reſt of Europe. The ignorance of our anceſtors kept them unacquainted with the ancients; except through the medium of a French tranſlation. The firſt labours of the Engliſh preſs brought to light the productions of Engliſh literature; which, how rude and barbarous ſoever, were not confined to the intelligence of the ſcholar, or the libraries of the learned; but diſperſed throughout the nation, and open to the inſpection of all, diſſeminated a general taſte for

literature, and gave a ſlow, gradual poliſh to our language:—while in every other nation of Europe, the conceits of commentators, and writers of a ſimilar ſtamp, whoſe higheſt ambition it was to add a Latin termination to a High Dutch name, came into the world, covered with ill ſorted ſhreds of *Cicero* and *Virgil*; like the evil ſpirits, which have been ſaid to animate a caſt-off carcaſe, previous to their aſcenſion to the regions of light.

THE MICROCOSM.

No. XVII.—MONDAY, *March* 12, 1787.

——*Diverſa Sequentes.*——HOR.
Various their ſubjects.

'TO GREGORY GRIFFIN, ESQ.

'SIR,

'I Have thrown together a few obſerva-'tions on the true purpoſe and extent 'of politeneſs, a ſubject not altogether 'unintereſting; as it is in the proper 'or improper application of this, that we are to 'look for the real elegancies and heitenings of 'poliſhed life; or the falſe and empty profeſſions 'of hypocriſy. And firſt, it may not be amiſs to obſerve,

'obſerve, that though it can by no means be 'deemed in itſelf a ſufficient ſubſtitute for real 'merit, yet it never fails to give it a poliſh where-'ever it meets with it. By ſoftening down the 'more prominent features, and as it were malle-'ating the harder and more unyielding parts of 'the compoſition, it renders the object at once 'amiable and reſpectable. We may call it the 'Handmaid of Benevolence, buſied at the ſame time in adding to the native charms of her 'miſtreſs, and performing farther ſuch little of-'fices, as ſeem not to come immediately within 'her own department. Not contented, however, 'with this ſtation, ſhe has uſurped a higher cha-'racter, and like the ſhade of departed Sin-'cerity, increaſes on us, and ſwells on the eye 'with that extraordinary expanſion, which we 'are told the ſpiritual nature is capable of.

'She addreſſes us in borrowed phraſe, and with 'complacent ſmiles, and ſeemingly honeſt wel-'come, beckons us to the hollow embraces of a 'viſionary impoſtor. Nor is ſuch an impoſtor to 'be deſpiſed, as a weak or an impotent enemy. 'Like other counterfeits, ſhe becomes the imme-diate tool of the worldly-minded, who find her a

'ready

'ready instrument for the execution of their mercenary views; and even the best are found upon 'some occasions to prostitute her to the most unworthy purposes. Let me not, however, from 'this be deemed an enemy to polished manners.— 'As far as the adjusting ceremonials which fashion 'has prescribed, and which cannot but be innocent, because we seem in this case to enter 'into a sort of tacit compact of mutual deceit; 'still let them be the passport of a gentleman, and 'the stamp of civilization.

'But here let Politeness stop; let her not assume 'the form and accent of Philanthropy; let her not 'smile upon her follower,—then turn from him "with hard unkindness' altered eye." In this we 'trace a blacker motive; it is not the effect of a 'disposition curious in the observance of the minuter parts of ceremonial, but the deliberate cruelty of a reflecting mind.

'Many indeed are the ill consequences arising 'from the misapplication of politeness; in one 'it introduces an effeminacy and unmanliness of 'character; another accustoming himself to varnish over things in their nature ambiguous, in-

'sensibly

'ſenſibly finds his perceptions of right and wrong
'become leſs clear and diſtinct; the invariable
'lines of truth and reaſon are confounded; and
'the moral ſenſe itſelf becomes languid and inac-
'tive. It is true, that all who offend thus, err
'not from the the ſame motive; and it is not un-
'frequently from an affectation of riſing higher
'than the higheſt, and of making improvements
'in an art already as perfect as it ought to be,
'that this has ſo far exceeded its natural limits:
'If ſo, it may not be amiſs to obſerve, that as in
'all other languages, ſo in the courteous vocabu-
'lary, there is a period, after which all innovation
'becomes barbarous; and as in the former caſe
'the author who can add nothing to his original
'ſtock of materials, may, however, by a judicious
'arrangement give them all the graces of elo-
'cution; ſo may our Cheſterfield Graduate diſ-
'play to us the fine gentleman with all its height-
'enings, without exceeding the limits which both
'faſhion has preſcribed, and worldly ſincerity
'may allow of.

'I am, Sir, your's, &c.

'———.'

To GREGORY GRIFFIN, ESQ.

'DEAR SIR,

'As you have in a foregoing 'paper ſo generouſly promiſed to attend impar- 'tially to every complaint which ſhall be ſub- 'mitted to your cognizance; I think no one can 'lay a juſter claim to your attention, and even 'compaſſion, than myſelf.—My whole life has 'been one continued ſeries of misfortunes.

'I will not enter into a detail of my pedigree, 'as that is both immaterial and unintereſting; ſuf- 'fice it to ſay, I am the only Son of a Clergyman; 'who being diſguſted with ſome ſlights he had 'received in the world, retired to a ſmall living in 'the North of England; with the determination 'of devoting his whole time, to the care of my 'education, which he was in every reſpect calcu- 'lated to ſuperintend. At the age of eighteen I 'had the good fortune to obtain a Scholarſhip at 'the Univerſity, and then the good old man, as if 'he had compleated all his worldly affairs, reſigned 'himſelf into the hands of his maker; leaving me 'no other inheritance than his benediction.—As I 'had been ſtrictly educated in the principles of ho-

'nour

'nour and religion, I could not, I confeſs, behold 'the vice and folly of my fellow ſtudents, without 'endeavouring to point out to them the impropri- 'ety and depravity of their conduct; for my good 'nature however I was ridiculed; for my ſtrict 'adherence to virtue I obtained the appellation of 'a *Prig*; and in ſhort was univerſally laughed at 'and inſulted.

'For the ſpace of twenty years I led this life of 'miſery; 'till at length urged on by the perpe- 'tual indignities I received, and quite weary of a 'College life, I gladly accepted the offer of a 'gentleman to become tutor to his ſons; and thus 'gave up my wretched liberty for a ſtill more 'wretched dependance. I flattered myſelf, indeed, 'that I had bettered my ſituation; but alas! into 'what an error had I fallen! I ſoon perceived, that 'Mr. B. was a profeſſed libertine, and his lady a 'female rake. I conſoled myſelf, however, with the 'thoughts of paſſing my time agreeably in the 'care of my young pupils; but here I was again 'miſtaken.—They were four in number, all alike 'ungovernable, uncontroulable.—I ſtrove at firſt 'to gain their affections by lenity and mildneſs; 'but I ſtrove in vain. I then began to enforce

'harſher

'harſher methods, and even to inflict chaſtiſement; 'but I was ſoon given to underſtand, that Mr. B. 'did not permit *his* ſons to be uſed like *common* 'boys. Thus, Sir, I loſt all authority over my 'pupils; who now offer me every inſult and in-'dignity, that their malice or revenge can ſuggeſt; 'and take every opportunity of ſhewing their con-'tempt and ſuperiority over me.—All this, Sir, I 'could bear; as I am conſcious of my own up-'rightneſs and integrity; but there is another 'circumſtance which raiſes my indignation to the 'higheſt pitch. Mr. B. ſometimes compells me 'to be preſent at his exceſſes; alledging with a 'ſneer, that his chaplain certainly is the propereſt 'man to ſay grace at his table. There, Sir, I am 'not only a ſpectator of the moſt infamous and in-'decent behaviour, but am frequently compelled 'to hear even the moſt daring and impious blaſ-'phemies; which raiſe at the ſame time my horror 'and indignation. This, Mr. Griffin, is what I 'cannot bear, and am determined to quit this 'houſe immediately; if, therefore, you ſhould be 'able to procure me any place, agreeable to my 'profeſſion, as no doubt your intereſt in both 'worlds is great, you will confer a real favour on,

'Your ſincere admirer,

'ARTHUR CASSOCK.'

'TO GREGORY GRIFFIN, ESQ.

'SIR,

'I F the ſincerity of the fol-
'lowing verſes can recommend them to your no-
'tice, and the tedioufneſs of them be not foreign
'to your plan; I ſhall be much pleaſed to ſee
'them in a paper of the MICROCOSM.

'Your's, Sir,

'ETONENSIS.'

'Aſk ye, companions of my infant years,
'Why riſe my ſighs, why flow my frequent tears?
'Ah! know, e're Cynthia ſhall her orb compleat,
'I leave, unhappy youth, fair Learning's ſeat:
'I leave, dear Eton, thy maternal arms,
'Theſe hallow'd walls, the muſes much lov'd
'charms,
'To brave the ſtorms, ah! many a ſtorm I ween,
'That hover round life's ſad and gloomy ſcene.
'But e're I go, accept theſe artleſs lays,
'That flow ſincere, nor aſk a poet's praiſe;
'If they my boundleſs gratitude will ſpeak,
'No more I aſk, no greater need I ſeek.
'Sadly I go—the truth my tears will tell—
'Sadly, dear Eton, take a long farewell;
'For dawning reaſon warns, that leaving you,
'To peace, to innocence, I bid adieu:

'Yes,

'Yes, it is true, whate'er the world may ſay,
'Within your walls the moral virtues play;
'Infuſe their power in ev'ry pupil's breaſt,
'And give the features health, the conſcience, reſt.
'Oh! if thy precepts would forever live,
'Stampt on my breaſt, & their chaſte influence give;
'Still ſhould I virtue's warning voice revere,
'Nor lend to Syren's ſong a wanton ear.
'Amid the frantic mirth, the ſenſeleſs noiſe,
'Which headſtrong youth too oft miſtakes for joys;
'My inmoſt thoughts I ſtill would turn to thee,
'Call on thy name, and boaſt my reaſon free.
'Accept then, Eton, this my grateful pray'r,
'Long may'ſt thou flouriſh Phœbus' fav'rite care;
'Long may'ſt thou rear on high, the 'antique tow'r',
'Secure from greedy time's malicious pow'r.
'And thou, fair Thames, who view'ſt with con-
'ſcious pride,
'The jocund ſports that ſkirt thy ſedgy ſide,
'Farewell! no more ſhall I thy banks along,
'Sooth'd by ſoft murmurs, pen my uncouth ſong;
'No more by warm ideas rapt, ſhall dream,
'Of gay poetic ground and ſacred ſtream.
'To you, ye much lov'd trees, beneath whoſe ſhade,
'Thro' claſſic walks, in muſing mood I ſtray'd;
'I bid farewell, 'tis tyrant time commands,
'To ſeek new walks, and fields, in other lands:

To other lands I go; no more ſhall meet
'The well known face, no more the friend ſhall
'greet;
'Yes, dear companions, I ſhall find but few,
'On life's great ſtage, ſuch candid friends as you.
'I go, compell'd your friendſhip to forſake;—
'But O! whatever parts in life you take,
'O! in his part may each ſucceſsful prove,
'And crown the wiſh of my fraternal love.
'But what return, what due return can ſong,
'Song weak as mine, give them to whom belong
'The little gleanings of my claſſic lore,
'And all my knowledge (were that knowledge
'more)
'Yet I will thank you, nor the thanks refuſe,
'Ye kind *Inſtructors* of my liſping muſe;
'Accept the wiſhes of a grateful heart,
'That feels far more than language can impart.
'Whenever good ſhall mark my humble way,
'To you the merit and the thanks I'll pay;
'Where'er I go, your memories ſhall be dear,
'I'll love your leſſons, and your names revere.
'From pleaſure's paths unwillingly I ſtray,
'The ſummer paſt, then comes a winter's day;
'Sadly I go—the truth my tears will tell—
'Sadly, dear Eton, take a long farewell.'

THE

MICROCOSM.

No. XVIII.- MONDAY, *March* 12, 1787.

Fruitur famâ ſui.——TACITUS.

He becomes a witneſs of the opinions which others entertain of him.

"MERCURY,' ſays the fabuliſt, 'wiſhing to know in what eſtimation he 'was held by mankind, put off the 'inſignia of divinity, and aſſuming 'the air and appearance of a mere mortal, entered 'into the ſhop of a ſtatuary. Having purchaſed, 'at a conſiderable price, a Jupiter, a Juno, a Fury 'or two, and ſome other nick-nacks of the ſame 'kind "And what," ſaid he, pointing to a ſtatue of

'of himſelf, which ſtood on graceful tiptoe in the 'window, "what may be the price of that elegant "image?" "Sir," replied the artiſt, "you have "proved ſo good a cuſtomer to me, for ſome of "my beſt pieces, that I ſhall but do you juſtice, "if I throw you that paltry figure into the "bargain."

Prevalent as every ſpecies of curioſity is among mankind, there is none which has ſo powerful an influence over every man, as this deſire of knowing what the world may think of him. There is none, the gratification of which is ſo eagerly deſired, or, in general, ſo heartily repented of.

A man in his abſence will undoubtedly be ſpoken of with more freedom than when preſent. His faults will be more openly pointed out; his vices more ſtrongly cenſured; his whole character will undergo a ſtricter examination, and will be ſcrutinized with leſs reſerve, and more impartiality. Cenſure will not be reſtrained by the fear of giving offence; nor praiſe allured, by the hopes of conciliating affection.

Should he therefore take advantage of his ſuppoſed abſence, to diſcover the true opinions of others

others with regard to himself, he will run no little risque of hearing disagreeable truths; which at the same time that they inform him of foibles in himself, against which he had hitherto shut his eyes, seldom or never fail to estrange his esteem from those, to whom he is indebted for the information.

Advice, however earnestly sought, however ardently solicited, if it does not coincide with a man's own opinions, if it tends only to investigate the improprieties, to correct the criminal excesses of his conduct; to dissuade from a continuance, and to recommend a reformation of his errors; seldom answers any other purpose than to put him out of humour with himself, and to alienate his affections from the adviser. If then, censure, even when thus courted under the name of kindness, is so destructive to all friendship, how much more so must it be, when being bestowed unasked and unavowed, its intention seems not so much to caution, as to criminate; to reform, as to condemn. For in this light must all strictures, past on an absent person, appear to himself; when, instead of the candour of open advice, the warnings of friendly admonition, he fancies that he discover

covers the meanneſs of ſecret calumny, the malice of deliberate detraction.

It cannot then but be evident to every man how dangerous an experiment it is, thus artfully to ſearch out the opinion others may entertain of him; which, when diſcovered, is generally the cauſe of not a little mortification; and makes an impreſſion on the mind, hardly ever to be effaced, by ſubſequent profeſſions of eſteem, or even a ſeries of diſintereſted ſervices. An impreſſion, which is deepened by a ſenſe of the treachery of thoſe, who took advantage of his abſence to canvaſs his faults; and by a remembrance of the diſhoneſt artifice by which he obtained a knowledge of their opinions.

And if it be thus neceſſary for every man to be cautious of prying into the opinions of others, with regard to himſelf, it is no leſs neceſſary that he ſhould beware, before whom, or what perſons he delivers his own opinion. An unlucky cenſure, an unintentional ſarcaſm, has ſometimes checked the progreſs of intimacy, has looſened the bonds of friendſhip, and has branded the unwary author of it with the title of a cynic, or a

ſlan-

derer. I remember an inſtance of this kind, which though not very ſerious in its conſequences, muſt nevertheleſs have been extremely diſtreſſing. —A Gentleman in a crowded theatre, turned ſuddenly round to a ſtranger who ſat beſide him, and enquired haſtily 'what *ugly hag* was that coming into an oppoſite box?'—The ſtranger, with a low bow of acknowledgement, replied, that it was his *ſiſter*.' The gentleman, confounded and aſhamed made an eager but awkward endeavour to exculpate himſelf; and as errors, like misfortunes, ſeldom come ſingly,—'Pardon me, Sir,' cried he, 'it was not that *good looking young lady*, I meant 'to point out to you, but that *deformed witch*, 'that ſits next to her.'—The ſtranger repeated his obeiſance, and '*that*, Sir,' ſaid he, 'is my *wife*.' There is not perhaps another ſituation ſo diſtreſſing as one of this kind; where an unhappy mortal, having, by a caſual inadvertency, made one falſe ſtep, which he is unable to retrieve, becomes conſcious of his miſtake; and unwilling to go forward, yet not knowing how to recede, confuſed in apologies, and entangled in excuſes, ſeeking in vain for ſome clue of explanation, wanders through a maze of error, and is loſt in a labyrinth of perplexity.

But it is not my intention to weary my readers through the whole of this paper, with prudential cautions, and dogmas on diſcretion. I ſhall at preſent conſider my ſubject only as it relates to myſelf. '*Scribam ipſe de me.*' 'I will become 'my own hiſtorian,' ſays *Cicero*, in that extraordinary ſpecimen of unbounded vanity, his letter to *Lucceius*; '*multorum tamen exemplo, et clarorum* '*virorum*,' 'in imitation however of many and 'illuſtrious men.'—To become 'their own 'hiſtorians' has been the conſtant practice of all my illuſtrious predeceſſors; none of whom have omitted, in ſome part of their works, to deſcant on the importance and uſefulneſs of their undertaking; to diſplay the unavoidable inconveniences, or boaſt of the peculiar advantages, incident to their ſituation.

Availing myſelf of theſe precedents, I may be allowed to boaſt, that there is no one who enjoys ſo many favourable opportunities of gratifying the curioſity, which I have made the ſubject of this paper, of diſcovering the real opinion my readers entertain of myſelf and my lucubrations. Perſonally unknown, even to my fellow-citizens, as *Gregory Griffin*, I am afforded conſiderable entertainment

tertainment by becoming an auditor of their criticisms on the work, and a confidant of their conjectures on the Author. Many a time have I heard in silence my own accusation; have joined in a general sneer, or even affected to participate in a hearty laugh at my own expence. And as often, to the great pain of my natural modesty, have I tacitly assented to the praise, or even loudly concurred in the commendations of my own performances. In trials of the former kind, I own I have sometimes found it difficult to restrain the feelings of an author; and have been ready to give vent to my indignation, when I have seen my labours degraded to the most menial employments, and insultingly placed under a pound of butter, or wrapped round the handle of a tea kettle. At other times I have been sinking with shame, and confounded with gratitude, when I have chanced to meet with gentlemen, who have been so good as to clear me of all my faults, by kindly taking them on themselves; and candidly confessing, that they *did* send me this or that paper, and *did* give me permission to publish it, without acknowledging my obligations. To these gentlemen I am proud of an opportunity to return my thanks for the honour they confer on

me, and to aſſure them that all my papers are very much at their ſervice; provided only, that they will be ſo kind as juſt to ſend me previous notice which they may think fit to own; that my book-ſeller may have proper directions, if called upon, to confirm their reſpective claims; and for the prevention of any error, which might otherwiſe ariſe, ſhould two perſons unfortunately make the ſame choice.

In the courſe of the diſcoveries which have been confidentially imparted to me, I have been not a little amuſed by the variety of poſitive proofs on which each has grounded his knowledge of the author. So confident indeed have been ſome aſſertions, that I have been much ſtaggered in my belief, and almoſt inclined to doubt my own identity. About three weeks ago I was very ſeriouſly alarmed, by intelligence which I received of an illneſs under which I then laboured. My informer was certain of his fact, but enjoined me not to mention it again; he had, it ſeems, been let into the ſecret by a friend of his, who had been told of it by an acquaintance of his, who had had it from a near relation of his, who had been informed of it by an intimate of her's, who had

had heard it from the beſt authority. Here, indeed, was the cleareſt conviction, and proofs, which amounted to a certainty; and I really began to be very uneaſy about the Conſequences of my indiſpoſition, when I was happily relieved from my anxiety by another friend of mine, who, with like injunctions of ſecrecy, and equal poſitiveneſs of aſſertion, aſſured me that I was then very well, and had been ſeen in a Commoner's gown at one of the Univerſities.

But nothing has diverted me more than the various ſtrictures paſſed on me by ſuch as have wiſhed either to correct me by counſel, or damp me by diſcouragement. In theſe I have been frequently amuſed by a fair arrangement of contradictory criticiſms, and objections which obviate each other.—Awkward imitation—and affected originality; the oſtentation of reading,—and the want of it, have been carped at with equal ſeverity: Some have objected to the "*price-two-pence*," and others to the "*præcox ingenium*;" ſome are offended by the arrogance of unneceſſary egotiſm; and others ſneer at the unimportance of anonymous obſcurity.

As ſpecimens of theſe oppoſite cenſures, I ſhall ſubjoin a few ſhort letters, by which various well-meaning perſons have, at different times, kindly attempted my reformation.

'SIR,

'From the promiſing exordium of your elegant work, I own, I expected to find much better amuſement, and, let me add, inſtruction, than humorous caricaturas of the foibles and follies of your fellow-citizens; let me hope, Sir, you will no longer proceed on this plan, but will riſe to ſubjects more worthy your genius and abilities.

'I am, Sir, yours,

'*Lincoln's-Inn, Nov.* 25, 1786. 'AMICUS.'

'Mr. GRIFFIN,

'I thought you promiſed, in the beginning of your work, that you would confine it to your fellow-citizens; this you have not done. You will, perhaps, anſwer, that you have at leaſt choſen ſuch ſubjects, as would inſtruct and improve

'prove them.' But that is not what I mean. 'In ſhort, Sir, are we to have any Satire, or, are 'we not?

'Yours,

'*Eton, Feb.* 19, 1787.

'A FELLOW-CITIZEN.'

'SIR,

'I am extremely pleaſed with the whole of 'your admirable work. It is a praiſeworthy at-'tempt, and if it ſucceeds, which I cannot doubt, 'will reflect great honour on the place of your 'Education. I hope you will continue to in-'terſperſe it throughout with poetical pieces; 'I received much pleaſure from thoſe which I 'have already peruſed, and am certain every one 'who views your work through a medium of 'candour muſt do the ſame. I am, Sir,

'Your admirer,

'———.'

'Mr. GREGORY,

'I like your work very well, upon the 'whole; very well indeed—but pray beware of

'poetry—ſtick to proſe and you may ſucceed—
'but poetry, Sir, will never do.—Another thing,
'Mr. G. I would adviſe you, to imitate *Mr. Ad-*
'*diſon* more,—you can never copy too cloſely ſo
'great an original.—Take my advice, Sir, and
'believe me,

'Your well-wiſher,

'CRITICUS."

'I write merely to warn you, Sir, that imi-
'tation, carried too far, becomes plagiariſm.
'An *Addiſon*, Sir, may be imitated too far.
"I hate e'en *Garrick* thus at ſecond hand."

'Yours,

'CENSOR,'

'MY DEAR SIR,

'I am particularly pleaſed with your equi-
'table treatment of Correſpondents; in paying
'ſo ſtrict an attention to their communications,
'and yet not making that a plea for inactivity,
'or a remiſſion of your weekly labours. That

'you

'you may long continue to enjoy the reputation
'you ſo juſtly merit, is the ſincere wiſh of, Sir,

'Your Admirer,

'*London, March* 1, 1787. E. P.

'As long as you gave one number a week,
'Mr. Griffin, it was all very well, and I took two
'of each,—but now you give two every week;
'and tho' you pretend to do it out of juſtice to
'correſpondents, let me tell you, Sir, it has a
'very mercenary appearance,—and ſo long as this
'continues, I ſhall only take one of each—ſo
'you'll get nothing by it,

'From your humble Servant,

'ANAS!'

'SIR,

'In a literary performance by a juvenile
'author, I feared to find intermixed much of
'the common traſh of periodical papers; ſtories
'of love-adventures "*founded on facts*," luckleſs
'pairs, happy marriages, and jumbles of jealouſy
'and ſentimental affection;—I am, Sir, happily
'diſappointed,—and hope you will continue,

'without any mixture of ſtuff about love, which 'young men ought to know nothing of, thus to 'amuſe,

'You conſtant Reader,

'GERTRUDE GRUM.'

'Mr. GRIFFIN, SIR,

'This comes to let you know, that tho' I 'can't write nor read, our Peter writes this for 'me, and I hear all your papers read in our 'kitchen. I don't underſtand none of them, not 'I; but I ſee there's nothing at all about love, 'or about maid-ſervants making their fortunes 'by marriage. O! Mr. Griffin, if you be he, 'they ſays you be, you know the perſon that I 'love beſt. He is to be ſure the prettieſt behaved, 'ſweeteſt young gentleman, and his name begins 'with a—no, but I wont tell you what his name 'begins with neither,—but could not you juſt 'give him a hint about his loving humble ſervant, 'as he calls me,

'MARITORNES.'

'P. S. Peter can *read*, and *write*, and *cypher* too.

I have taken ſome liberties with my laſt correſpondent, in adjuſting the orthography of her letter, ſo as to adapt it to common comprehenſion; if there is any other alteration, ſhe muſt look for its cauſe in the P. S. where *Peter* (totally, I believe, with a view to his own aggrandizement, and without the privity and conſent of his fair employer) declares his ſkill in *cyphering*, which he has practiſed with ſuch ſucceſs as to render the decyphering a matter of no ſmall difficulty.

I ſhall not add any comment to the preceding letters, but leave them, like the *Gravitation* and *Centrifugal force*, which Philoſophers talk of, to counteract each other's tendency; and conclude my paper, as I began it, with a tale; which though perhaps it may be very old, enjoys a double advantage, which tales ſeldom do, of being extremely ſhort, and extremely *apropos*.

A Painter of great ſkill and eminence, who wiſhed to have his work as free from blemiſhes, and as correctly beautiful as a picture could be made, hung it up one morning in the public market-place, with a requeſt that every one

would

would take the trouble to mark what he thought the faulty part of the performance. Coming in the evening to carry home his picture, he was ſurpriſed and mortified to find every part of it covered with faults. Not a muſcle of the body, or a feature of the face, but bore ſome ſign of diſapprobation. Reſolving, however, to ſee whether his piece was entirely deſtitute of beauties, he hung it up next morning in the ſame place, deſiring, that every one would be ſo kind as to ſet ſome mark on what he thought the excellencies of the picture. Coming as before in the evening to carry it away, it was not a little conſolation to him, to find thoſe very parts, that had before exhibited the ſtrongeſt ſigns of diſlike, now marked with the utmoſt encomium; to find, that if he had before had reaſon to lament having excited univerſal diſguſt, he might now be proportionably proud of having conciliated univerſal admiration.

B.

THE MICROCOSM.

No. XIX.—MONDAY, *March* 19, 1787.

Οἷον δὲ τρέφει ἔρνος ἀνὴρ ἐριθηλὲς ἐλαίης
Χώρῳ ἐν οἰνοπόλῳ, ὅθ' ἅλις ἀναβέβρυχεν ὕδωρ,
Καλὸν, τηλεθάον, τὸ δέ τε πνοιαὶ δονέουσι
Παντοίων ἀνέμων, καί τε βρύει ἄνθει λευκῷ·
Ἐλθὼν δ' ἐξαπίνης ἄνεμος, σὺν λαίλαπι πολλῇ,
Βόθρου τ' ἐξέρεψε, καὶ ἐξετάνυσσ' ἐπὶ γαίῃ.

HOM. Il.

As the young olive in ſome ſylvan ſcene,
Crown'd by freſh fountains with eternal green,
Lifts the gay head, in ſnowy flowrets fair,
And plays and dances to the gentle air;
When lo! a whirlwind from high heav'n invades
The tender plant, and withers all its ſhades;
It lies uprooted in its genial bed,
A lovely ruin, now defac'd and dead.——POPE.

IT is an obſervation founded on a general ſurvey of mankind, and which I am afraid a cloſer inſpection would not controvert, that one half of the world knows not how the other exiſts.

This

This however might in part be attributed to the inſufficiency of human nature, were it not a melancholy truth, that their negligence in this point is equal to their ignorance. Nurſed in the lap of luxury, the ſon of fortune, whoſe budding hopes have never been nipped by the blaſt of adverſity, turns his eyes with contemptuous diſguſt from the cheerleſs ſcenes of penury and diſtreſs, to the dazzling glare, which, under pretence of lulling ſorrow, ſtares reflection out of countenance, and convicts reaſon of Cyniciſm by the ſpecious appearance of indulging harmleſs gaiety. The liſtleſs Apathiſt, becalmed in his own inſenſibility, looks with a vacant eye on the terrors of conflicting paſſion; or as the utmoſt exertion of his pity, endeavours to allay the ſtorm of a weak but generous mind, with the dictatorial precepts of a cloſeted philoſopher.

Thoſe of the above deſcription I warn to proceed no farther in this paper. To the feeling, and in this community I ſhould hope the major part of my readers, the authenticity of the following ſtory will carry with it a ſufficient apology.

The

The father of Frederic having from an early pique ſecluded himſelf from mankind, devoted an ample fortune to his family, his ſtables, and his cellar, in the extremity of Somerſetſhire. He was naturally of a morofe, ſaturnine temper, which a conſiderable quantity of port, regularly diſcuſſed after dinner for a continuance of thirty years, had not a little contributed to heighten. The uſual companion of his leiſure hours was the Pariſh Attorney, a ſupple knave, who, as occaſion ſerved, could rail at the times, praiſe the wine, take ſnuff, or ring for *t'other bottle*. Argument, it is natural to ſuppoſe, would not have beguiled many hours with ſuch a duumvirate; but the 'Squire was too diſtruſtful of any thing human to be circumvented in the common way; and his Achates too much a Maſter of Arts to attempt it.

By a feint therefore at firſt of oppoſition, and at every convenient opportunity of conviction, he frequently flattered this petty tyrant more agreeably, and ſometimes allured him to his own opinion. The ſubject of his eldeſt ſon's education was long on the tapis; the 'Squire being too much of a miſanthrope to reliſh the idea of a public ſchool, and the Lawyer too jealous of the boy's growing in-

influence, not to wiſh ſo powerful an obſtacle removed. At length however by a more than uſual exertion of artifice, he wheedled the old Gentleman out of his prejudices, and at ten years of age, Frederic was ſent to Eton. Even at this early period the natural warmth of his diſpoſition had began to diſplay itſelf. Open, candid, and generous, his heart was the conſtant companion of his hand, and his tongue the artleſs index of his mind. As his ideas expanded, his virtues ſeemed to have acquired a larger ſcope; and the unſuſpecting generoſity which had before induced him heedleſsly to depoſit his joys and griefs with every ſtranger, to have been matured into a warm philanthropic benevolence for human nature, and a romantic attachment to the few who were the more immediate objects of his affections. Expoſed alike to the attacks of all the generous paſſions, the impetuous ſallies of his temper were as eaſily ſuppreſſed as excited. Jealous in the extreme of obligations, and keenly ſenſitive in any point which appealed to his honour or compaſſion, he was always a ſtranger to the calm ſerenity of a virtuous mind; and ultimately overwhelm'd by thoſe feelings which are ſo often the pleaſing curſe of a luxuriant imagination.

To theſe qualifications of the heart, Frederic added the endowments of an elegant fancy; often indeed too impatient of the neceſſary reſtrictions of art, but naturally corrected by ſo pure a taſte, as to enable him to diſcern, with admirable perſpicuity, the limits of true and falſe beauty; and thoſe of his claſſical compoſitions which peculiarly ſtruck his ideas, united that vivid, energetic glow of thought, which true genius alone can conceive, to a ſimple chaſtity of expreſſion which only correct judgment can define. As an agreeable poliſh to ſo much intrinſic merit, his countenance was lively and animated, his figure genteel, and his manners engaging.

In human as in inanimate nature, ſimilar qualities will have a mutual attraction. By directing our thoughts to the ſame objects; by viewing each other's ideas with a ſympathetic benevolence; nay even by thoſe friendly conteſts, which in the moſt perfect unanimity of opinion the digreſſive ſallies of enthuſiaſm ſometimes give riſe to; but which tend only to diverſify the calm of univerſal concurrence, we inſenſibly glide into that intimate harmony, without which ſociety is but a ſtate of armed neutrality, little ſuperior to the open warfare

fare of ſavage nature. By each of theſe ties was a Romantic friendſhip cemented between Frederic and Edmond; their ſentiments and inclinations mutually led them to a tender regard for each other's virtues. And as they were equally bleſſed with all external contingencies towards happineſs in future, they looked forward with ſatisfaction to the ſcene of active life, which ſeemed to invite them to the honourable exertion of their abilities.

But, alas! ſo fair a morning was overcaſt in its dawn. Frederic's virtues, which though they could not have prolonged his exiſtence, might at leaſt have entitled him to a calm reſignation of his breath, and the ſublime ſatisfaction of a tranquil mind in the awful moment of diſſolution, were blaſted by the artful inſinuations of a villain. The worthy perpetrator of this precious piece of villainy, had, by magnifying puerile foibles into the premeditated depravities of a black heart, at length ſo eſtranged the affections of his father, as to prevail on him to make a will entirely in his own favour; and the firſt notice of his diſpleaſure, was conveyed to Frederic by the Executor, ſome days after his death.

Melan-

Melancholy, to a ſoft and lively mind, is at firſt an unwelcome ſtranger; the propenſity to indulge its ſenſations is ſtrongly engrafted in our natures, and we feel our own weakneſs though we cannot overcome it. It was in vain that Frederic called to mind every conſolatory precept which philoſophy can ſo well ſuggeſt, but human nature ſo ill practice on theſe occaſions; he began to loſe his reliſh for ſociety, and even to avoid the company of a friend, to whom he could now look on his attachment in no other light than as a burthen. The quick jealouſy of Edmond did not let this alteration paſs unobſerved. He endeavoured, by an increaſed attention, to diſpel the cloud he perceived lowering on his friend's ſpirits; but in vain. Reſolved therefore by one effort, to requeſt that confidence which his eſteem taught him he was entitled to, he took the opportunity of communicating one day his obſervations, and complaining of that reſerve which had before been a ſtranger to their intercourſe. Frederic felt this reproach, and reſolved to ſacrifice his own feelings to thoſe of his friend. "Edmond," ſaid he, "hitherto we "have lived together in the moſt uninterrupted "union; that we might have died as we have lived "was the fondeſt hope my imagination ever che-

"riſhed;

" riſhed;—That hope is blaſted.—Whatever may " have dictated this letter, I am guiltleſs of having " given the moſt trivial occaſion for it." Edmond read the letter with that mixed emotion which a good mind feels at the calamity of a friend, and the proſpect of relieving it. " My friend," he replied, " what delicacy would otherwiſe have pre- " vented me from preſſing, your candour has " forced from me; need I tell you, that providence " has furniſhed me with ample means for our " mutual happineſs; deſpiſe, while I have a " hand to ſerve you, the frowns of fortune; and " if that ſhould fail, let us encounter poverty to- " gether, and die as we have lived, *united*." " No, " Edmond, my pride forbids me to live a de- " pendant even on your generoſity; my miſery " ſhall never be a burthen to you. The wide " world is before me; my life has not been ſo " blackened with guilt, but I ſhall ſomewhere " find an aſylum, however wretched, to ex- " change a miſerable exiſtence for a tranquil " diſſolution; may you run that race of glory " which is denied to me; and may the recol- " lection of your loſt friend ſometimes diffuſe " a pleaſing melancholy over the moment of " reflection; but never, never embitter that un-

" in-

" interrupted felicity which your virtues are ſo " amply entitled to." Edmond had ſcarce ſtrength to urge his requeſt; 'till Frederic foreſeeing that the execution of his gloomy purpoſe might be prevented by the jealous vigilance of his friend, appeared by degrees to ſoften into compliance, and relieved his preſent anxiety by a momentary affectation of tranquility. He was ſcarce however retired to his chamber, when, having directed a ſmall note to Edmond, he threw himſelf into a chaiſe, and arrived late in the evening in the Metropolis. Regardleſs of the objects around him, and ſolely enveloped in the contemplation of the ſcene he had juſt quitted, he threw himſelf on a bed in the Inn at which he alighted; and with partial dozes, which only ſerved to render his ſituation more horrible, he reflected on his miſeries 'till morning. As ſoon as it was light, he determined to hire a lodging in ſome obſcure part of the town, where he might elude the prying generoſity of his friend, and endeavour to protract a miſerable exiſtence, which an enthuſiaſtic ſenſe of religion alone prevented him from ſacrificing to his deſpair. For this purpoſe he fixed on a miſerable garret, in thoſe gloomy regions, at ſight of which even adverſity recoils; here, with the aſ-

ſiſtance

ſiſtance of a few books which he had brought with him for the purpoſe, he endeavoured to beguile that hollow miſery which continually preyed on his vitals. And that no neglect of religious duty might embitter his reflections, determined to apply himſelf to ſome means of ſupporting life. Still therefore cheriſhing the idea of independence however wretched; he determined to enliſt himſelf among a tribe of tranſlators employed by an eminent bookſeller; vainly hoping, that while he earned his miſerable pittance, by a return of labour, the obligation would be conſidered as mutual. But he ſoon found that there is not ſo abject a ſlave as a hireling ſcribler, nor ſo tyrannical a deſpot, as an illiterate churl, who pays for learning and potatoes with the ſame remorſeleſs ſtupidity. The imperious arrogance of this Baſhaw, and the groſs adulation, and vulgar merriment of his fellow ſervants, was little ſuited to the proud ſenſibility of Frederic. He endured however the inſults of the one and jeſts of the others, 'till a fever, brought on by his continual agitation of ſpirits, actually deprived him of this means of earning a ſubſiſtence, and ſtretched him on his truckle bed amidſt all the horrors of famine, indigence, diſeaſe, and deſpair.

In the mean time, Edmond, whose violent affliction for the departure of his friend, had for some time reduced his life to a precarious situation; as soon as he found his health in some degree reestablished, determined to abandon a spot which only presented to his mind a gloomy recollection of the days that were gone, and to follow the fortunes of his friend. Having accordingly laid the circumstances before his father, he obtained a full permission to gratify his inclination He repaired to London, as supposing Frederic would abscond in some obscure spot of a labyrinth in which he was most likely to be effectually concealed.

After a fortnight's fruitless search, when a settled gloom had began to throw a damp on all his hopes of success, happening one day to enter the shop of Frederic's late employer, he overheard the literary monarch enforcing his daily rebuke with sundry oaths and ejaculations; and among other particulars, bitterly complaining of the absence of the pale dismal young man, who had lately enlisted in his service. This description immediately figured to his imagination, his dejected friend;——tremblingly alive with this idea, he eagerly

eagerly enquired his lodging, determining immediately to satisfy the fearful curiosity which his late absence had inspired. His first emotions a little subsided, he resolved previously to apply for medical assistance; that in case of any urgent necessity, it might be at hand. For this purpose he visited the late Dr. ———, and it was by his advice, that he determined to spare his friend's weak and exhausted spirits the agitation of a sudden interview.

It was not without considerable emotion that Edmond entered a dreary hut, whose very appearance was calculated to inspire misery; it was from the hag who owned this mansion, that he learned, that her lodger had for some time kept his bed; and was so reduced, by three days almost total abstinence, as to be frequently deprived of understanding. Shocked as he was at this information, he saw the propriety of the Physician's advice sufficiently, to take his stand at the door of the apartment, in order to watch the most favourable opportunity for an interview.

Frederic's strength had been that evening so far exhausted by a preceding delirium as to afford

— him-

him for a ſhort time the wretched poſſeſſion of his faculties. He was kneeling, with great apparent agony, before a bible, and graſping with a convulſive gripe the foot of his bed, as if by the exertion of his nerves, to awaken his fainting ſoul from the torpor which ſeemed to be gathering on it at every interval of impaſſioned phrenzy. There is in ſolitary miſery, a comfortleſs horror in brooding over misfortunes, which far exceeds even the cutting pangs we feel when thoſe we love are involved in our calamities. In the latter ſituation we have a pleaſing object to reſt the external ſenſe on; and the very gratification of our feelings on ſuch an occaſion, diffuſes a tranquil luxury over our ſorrows; in the former, all is dark and comfortleſs, and a gnawing horror perpetually ſuggeſts ideas, which the gangrened imagination, while it trembles to nouriſh, is unable to reſiſt the indulgence of. Such was the ſituation of Frederic, when the recollection of the paſt, the horror of the preſent, and the proſpect of the future, drew from the bottom of his ſoul, "*Oh! that I had the wings of a dove, then would I fly away and be at reſt.*" Edmond could at this ejaculation no longer contain himſelf, but ruſhing into the room, and hanging over his

fainting friend, "All may yet be well," ſaid he, "we may yet live to renew our pleaſures; to "purſue thoſe fond projects which your too de- "licate generoſity has ſo cruelly interrupted!" The well-known voice ſounded on Frederic's dy- ing ſenſes, and recalled a momentary exertion of his languid ſpirit; "Never, never, it is paſt! "Oh! Edmond, it is paſt!" then darting a look of deſpairing agony to Heaven, he exclaimed, in a trembling voice, "My God! My God! "why haſt thou forſaken me?" and ſinking into the arms of his friend, groaned out his ſoul, and expired.

C

NOTES to CORRESPONDENTS.

TOGATUS muſt have entered very dully into the ſpirit of the Numbers he objects to; I ſhall exemplify my *power of rejection*, in the non-inſertion of his Letter.--I ſhall be happy in the future correſpondence of SIMON SNUBNOSE; at preſent I fear he glances too much on Politics for admiſſion.

END OF VOL. I.

00044769

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 15 June, 2016